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The Ring's the Thing

Dabo Swinney's Clemson Tigers added to their growing jewelry collection and trophy case in January with the program's second College Football Playoff National Championship win in three seasons — this one in dominant fashion, with a 44–16 demolition of Alabama. With quarterback Trevor Lawrence and a host of weapons returning, the Tigers are more than capable of making it three out of four this season, although the Tide will be seeking redemption.

Michael Zagaris/Getty Images

QUESTION

What is your favorite college football mascot?

Ralphie

*I lean toward live animal mascots, so I'll go with **Ralphie**, Colorado's rampaging buffalo.*

*Every **good dog** on the sideline is the best mascot.*

Smokey

Uga X

***Bevo.** Having a live Texas longhorn at a football game is a terrible (but wildly entertaining) idea to me.*

Bevo

ATHLON SPORTS

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Big Red at Western Kentucky

Col. Reb

*While I was at Ole Miss we changed mascots multiple times ... but I'll always love our tried and true **Colonel Reb.***

Louisiana's Cayenne

This one is a bit of a stretch, but I'll go with Elvis, the Florida Gator!!! (That's Sonny Crockett's pet alligator on Miami Vice.)

Ohio University Bobcat

Albert

*Gotta go with **Albert** and Alberta (Florida Gators).*

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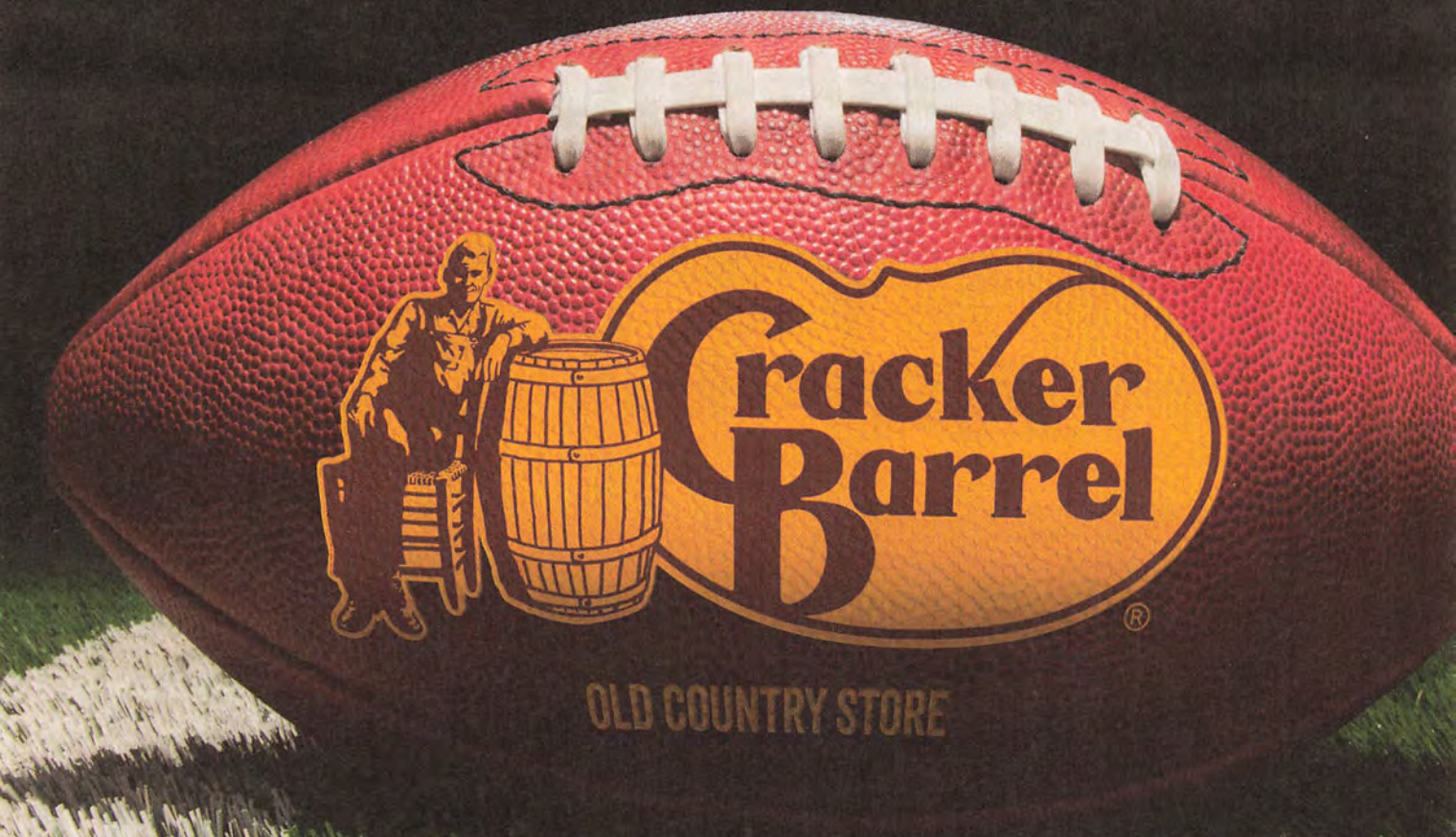

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ATHLON SPORTS
COLLEGE FOOTBALL PREVIEW 2019

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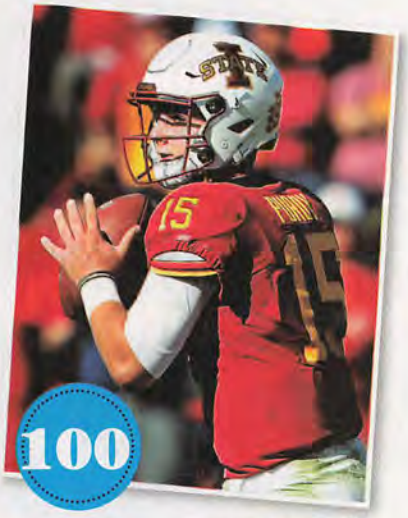

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REVIEW THE WEEK THAT WAS, PREVIEW THE WEEK AHEAD &

DON'T MISS A SECOND OF THE

MOMENTS IN BETWEEN

COVER 2

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ATHLON SPORTS PRESEASON 130 FBS RANKINGS

1. Alabama
2. Clemson
3. Georgia
4. Michigan
5. Ohio State
6. Oklahoma
7. LSU
8. Florida
9. Notre Dame
10. Texas A&M
11. Texas
12. Washington
13. Utah
14. Penn State
15. Oregon
16. Michigan State
17. Nebraska
18. Iowa
19. Wisconsin
20. Auburn
21. Syracuse
22. UCF
23. Missouri
24. Iowa State
25. Virginia
26. Virginia Tech
27. Washington State
28. Miami (Fla.)
29. Boise State
30. Mississippi State
31. Oklahoma State
32. South Carolina
33. Florida State
34. Stanford
35. Northwestern
36. Baylor
37. TCU
38. NC State
39. Cincinnati
40. Minnesota
41. Purdue
42. UCLA
43. USC
44. Army
45. Arizona State
46. Arizona
47. Tennessee
48. Kentucky
49. Memphis
50. Vanderbilt
51. Appalachian State
52. Utah State
53. Houston
54. Pittsburgh
55. BYU
56. Fresno State
57. California
58. West Virginia
59. Texas Tech
60. Wake Forest
61. Boston College
62. Ole Miss
63. San Diego State
64. Kansas State
65. Maryland
66. Duke
67. Indiana
68. North Carolina
69. Colorado
70. Arkansas
71. Marshall
72. Ohio
73. North Texas
74. Troy
75. Georgia Tech
76. Georgia Southern
77. USF
78. Temple
79. Arkansas State
80. Tulane
81. Louisville
82. Louisiana
83. Toledo
84. Air Force
85. Southern Miss
86. UAB
87. Western Michigan
88. SMU
89. Louisiana Tech
90. FIU
91. Northern Illinois
92. Illinois
93. Hawaii
94. FAU
95. Oregon State
96. Wyoming
97. MTSU
98. Buffalo
99. Nevada
100. Colorado State
101. Eastern Michigan
102. Navy
103. ULM
104. Tulsa
105. Miami (Ohio)
106. UNLV
107. Rutgers
108. Kansas
109. East Carolina
110. Liberty
111. WKU
112. Charlotte
113. New Mexico
114. Ball State
115. Kent State
116. Texas State
117. Old Dominion
118. San Jose State
119. UTSA
120. Central Michigan
121. Akron
122. Georgia State
123. South Alabama
124. Coastal Carolina
125. Bowling Green
126. UConn
127. New Mexico State
128. UTEP
129. UMass
130. Rice

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CONFERENCE PREDICTIONS

Records are projections for the 2019 season, overall and conference, through the regular season and conference championship games.

ACC

ATLANTIC

1. Clemson 13-0, 8-0
2. Syracuse 9-3, 5-3
3. Florida State 7-5, 4-4
4. NC State 7-5, 4-4
5. Wake Forest 7-5, 3-5
6. Boston College 6-6, 3-5
7. Louisville 4-8, 2-6

COASTAL

1. Virginia 9-4, 6-2
2. Virginia Tech 8-4, 5-3
3. Miami 8-4, 5-3
4. Pittsburgh 6-6, 4-4
5. Duke 5-7, 3-5
6. North Carolina 4-8, 2-6
7. Georgia Tech 4-8, 2-6

ACC CHAMPIONSHIP GAME

Clemson over Virginia

AMERICAN ATHLETIC

EAST

1. UCF 10-3, 6-2
2. Cincinnati 8-4, 5-3
3. USF 6-6, 5-3
4. Temple 7-5, 4-4
5. East Carolina 4-8, 1-7
6. UConn 2-10, 0-8

WEST

1. Memphis 9-4, 6-2
2. Houston 8-4, 6-2
3. Tulane 6-6, 4-4
4. SMU 6-6, 4-4
5. Navy 5-7, 4-4
6. Tulsa 4-8, 3-5

AAC CHAMPIONSHIP GAME

UCF over Memphis

BIG 12

1. Oklahoma 11-2, 7-2
2. Texas 9-4, 7-2
3. Iowa State 8-4, 6-3
4. Oklahoma State 8-4, 5-4
5. Baylor 8-4, 5-4
6. TCU 8-4, 5-4
7. West Virginia 6-6, 4-5
8. Texas Tech 5-7, 3-6
9. Kansas State 5-7, 3-6
10. Kansas 2-10, 0-9

BIG 12 CHAMPIONSHIP GAME

Oklahoma over Texas

BIG TEN

EAST

1. Michigan 12-1, 8-1
2. Ohio State 11-1, 8-1
3. Penn State 9-3, 6-3
4. Michigan State 8-4, 5-4
5. Maryland 5-7, 3-6
6. Indiana 5-7, 2-7
7. Rutgers 2-10, 0-9

WEST

1. Nebraska 9-4, 6-3
2. Iowa 9-3, 6-3
3. Wisconsin 8-4, 5-4
4. Northwestern 7-5, 5-4
5. Minnesota 7-5, 4-5
6. Purdue 6-6, 4-5
7. Illinois 4-8, 1-8

BIG TEN CHAMPIONSHIP GAME

Michigan over Nebraska

CONFERENCE USA

EAST

1. Marshall 9-4, 6-2
2. FIU 8-4, 6-2
3. FAU 7-5, 5-3
4. MTSU 6-6, 5-3
5. WKU 4-8, 3-5
6. Charlotte 4-8, 2-6
7. Old Dominion 3-9, 2-6

WEST

1. North Texas 8-5, 7-1
2. Southern Miss 8-4, 6-2
3. UAB 8-4, 5-3
4. Louisiana Tech 7-5, 4-4
5. UTSA 4-8, 3-5
6. UTEP 2-10, 1-7
7. Rice 1-11, 1-7

C-USA CHAMPIONSHIP GAME

Marshall over North Texas

INDEPENDENTS

1. Notre Dame 10-2
2. Army 11-2
3. BYU 7-5
4. Liberty 6-6
5. New Mexico State 3-9
6. UMass 2-10

MAC

EAST

1. Ohio 9-4, 6-2
2. Buffalo 6-6, 5-3
3. Miami 5-7, 4-4
4. Kent State 4-8, 3-5
5. Akron 3-9, 2-6
6. Bowling Green 2-10, 1-7

WEST

1. Toledo 8-5, 6-2
2. Western Michigan 8-4, 6-2
3. Northern Illinois 6-6, 5-3
4. Eastern Michigan 6-6, 5-3
5. Ball State 4-8, 3-5
6. Central Michigan 4-8, 2-6

MAC CHAMPIONSHIP GAME

Ohio over Toledo

MOUNTAIN WEST

MOUNTAIN

1. Boise State 11-2, 7-1
2. Utah State 8-4, 7-1
3. Air Force 7-5, 4-4
4. Wyoming 6-6, 3-5
5. Colorado State 4-8, 3-5
6. New Mexico 3-9, 1-7

WEST

1. Fresno State 8-5, 6-2
2. San Diego State 8-4, 6-2
3. Hawaii 7-6, 5-3
4. Nevada 5-7, 3-5
5. UNLV 4-8, 2-6
6. San Jose State 2-10, 1-7

MW CHAMPIONSHIP GAME

Boise State over Fresno State

PAC-12

NORTH

1. Washington 11-2, 7-2
2. Oregon 9-3, 7-2
3. Washington State 8-4, 5-4
4. Stanford 7-5, 5-4
5. California 6-6, 3-6
6. Oregon State 2-10, 1-8

SOUTH

1. Utah 10-3, 7-2
2. UCLA 7-5, 6-3
3. USC 6-6, 4-5
4. Arizona State 6-6, 4-5
5. Arizona 6-6, 3-6
6. Colorado 4-8, 2-7

PAC-12 CHAMPIONSHIP GAME

Washington over Utah

SEC

EAST

1. Georgia 12-1, 8-0
2. Florida 10-2, 6-2
3. Missouri 8-4, 4-4
4. South Carolina 6-6, 3-5
5. Tennessee 7-5, 3-5
6. Kentucky 6-6, 2-6
7. Vanderbilt 5-7, 2-6

WEST

1. Alabama 13-0, 8-0
2. LSU 10-2, 6-2
3. Texas A&M 8-4, 5-3
4. Auburn 7-5, 3-5
5. Mississippi State 7-5, 3-5
6. Ole Miss 5-7, 2-6
7. Arkansas 5-7, 1-7

SEC CHAMPIONSHIP GAME

Alabama over Georgia

SUN BELT

EAST

1. Appalachian State 9-4, 6-2
2. Troy 8-4, 6-2
3. Georgia Southern 7-5, 5-3
4. Georgia State 3-9, 2-6
5. Coastal Carolina 3-9, 1-7

WEST

1. Arkansas State 8-5, 6-2
2. Louisiana 7-5, 5-3
3. ULM 5-7, 4-4
4. Texas State 4-8, 3-5
5. South Alabama 3-9, 2-6

SUN BELT CHAMPIONSHIP GAME

Appalachian State over Arkansas State

ATHLON SPORTS ALL-AMERICA TEAM

Travis Etienne

FIRST TEAM OFFENSE

QUARTERBACK
Tua Tagovailoa
6-1, 218, Jr., Alabama

RUNNING BACK
Travis Etienne
5-10, 215, Jr., Clemson

RUNNING BACK
Jonathan Taylor
5-11, 219, Jr., Wisconsin

ALL-PURPOSE
Rondale Moore
5-9, 180, So., Purdue

WIDE RECEIVER
Jerry Jeudy
6-1, 192, Jr., Alabama

WIDE RECEIVER
Tylan Wallace
6-0, 185, Jr., Oklahoma State

Jedrick Willis Jr.

TIGHT END
Albert Okwuegbunam
6-5, 255, Jr., Missouri

CENTER
Tyler Biadasz
6-3, 318, Jr., Wisconsin

OFFENSIVE LINEMAN
Walker Little
6-7, 313, Jr., Stanford

OFFENSIVE LINEMAN
Andrew Thomas
6-5, 320, Jr., Georgia

OFFENSIVE LINEMAN
Calvin Throckmorton
6-5, 318, Sr., Oregon

OFFENSIVE LINEMAN
Jedrick Wills Jr.
6-5, 316, Jr., Alabama

Willis: Harrison McClary; Etienne, Brown: Paul Abell

FIRST TEAM DEFENSE

Derrick Brown

DEFENSIVE LINEMAN

Derrick Brown

6-5, 325, Sr., Auburn

DEFENSIVE LINEMAN

A.J. Epenesa

6-6, 280, Jr., Iowa

DEFENSIVE LINEMAN

Kenny Willekes

6-4, 262, Sr., Michigan State

DEFENSIVE LINEMAN

Chase Young

6-5, 265, Jr., Ohio State

LINEBACKER

Joe Bachie

6-2, 238, Sr., Michigan State

LINEBACKER

Dylan Moses

6-3, 235, Jr., Alabama

LINEBACKER

Evan Weaver

6-3, 245, Sr., California

CORNERBACK

Paulson Adebo

6-1, 189, So., Stanford

CORNERBACK

Bryce Hall

6-1, 200, Sr., Virginia

SAFETY

Grant Delpit

6-3, 203, Jr., LSU

SAFETY

Alohi Gilman

5-11, 201, Sr., Notre Dame

FIRST TEAM SPECIALISTS

KICKER

Andre Szmyt

6-1, 186, So., Syracuse

PUNTER

Braden Mann

5-11, 195, Sr., Texas A&M

KICK RETURNER

Ihmir Smith-Marsette

6-1, 177, Jr., Iowa

PUNT RETURNER

Isaiah Wright

6-2, 220, Sr., Temple

ATHLON SPORTS ALL-AMERICA TEAM

Ke'Shawn Vaughn

SECOND TEAM

OFFENSE

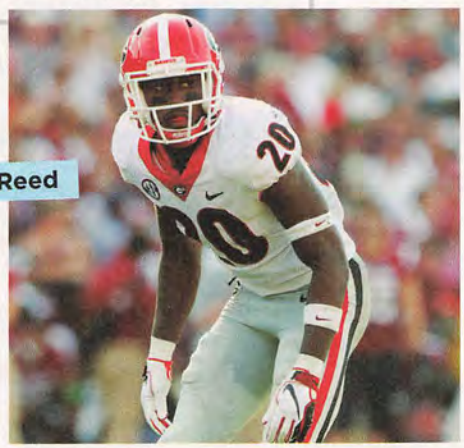
QB	Trevor Lawrence	6-6	215	So.	Clemson
RB	Najee Harris	6-2	227	Jr.	Alabama
RB	D'Andre Swift	5-9	215	Jr.	Georgia
AP	Ke'Shawn Vaughn	5-10	215	Sr.	Vanderbilt
WR	Tee Higgins	6-4	205	Jr.	Clemson
WR	Justyn Ross	6-4	205	So.	Clemson
TE	Hunter Bryant	6-2	241	Jr.	Washington
C	Zach Shackelford	6-4	305	Sr.	Texas
OL	Trey Adams	6-8	306	Sr.	Washington
OL	Ben Bredeson	6-5	320	Sr.	Michigan
OL	Alaric Jackson	6-6	320	Jr.	Iowa
OL	John Simpson	6-4	330	Sr.	Clemson

Tee Higgins

Raekwon Davis

DEFENSE

DL	Bradlee Anae	6-3	263	Sr.	Utah
DL	Raekwon Davis	6-7	309	Sr.	Alabama
DL	Yetur Gross-Matos	6-5	265	Jr.	Penn State
DL	Xavier Thomas	6-2	260	So.	Clemson
LB	Troy Dye	6-4	224	Sr.	Oregon
LB	Paddy Fisher	6-4	241	Jr.	Northwestern
LB	Isaiah Simmons	6-4	225	Jr.	Clemson
CB	Kristian Fulton	6-0	192	Sr.	LSU
CB	Lavert Hill	5-11	181	Sr.	Michigan
S	Xavier McKinney	6-1	196	Jr.	Alabama
S	J.R. Reed	6-1	194	Sr.	Georgia


J.R. Reed

SPECIALISTS

K	Rodrigo Blankenship	6-1	191	Sr.	Georgia
P	James Smith	6-5	225	Jr.	Cincinnati
KR	Savon Scarver	5-11	190	Jr.	Utah State
PR	Jaylen Waddle	5-10	182	So.	Alabama

Vaughn: VU Athletics; Davis, Higgins: Harrison McClary; Reed: Paul Abell

THIRD TEAM

OFFENSE

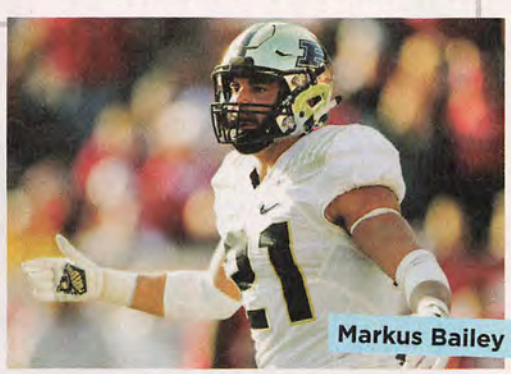
QB	Sam Ehlinger	6-3	235	Jr.	Texas
RB	Eno Benjamin	5-10	201	Jr.	Arizona State
RB	AJ Dillon	6-0	250	Jr.	Boston College
AP	J.J. Taylor	5-6	184	Jr.	Arizona
WR	CeeDee Lamb	6-2	189	Jr.	Oklahoma
WR	Laviska Shenault Jr.	6-2	225	Jr.	Colorado
TE	Grant Calcaterra	6-4	221	Jr.	Oklahoma
C	Creed Humphrey	6-5	325	So.	Oklahoma
OL	Ezra Cleveland	6-6	311	Jr.	Boise State
OL	Nick Harris	6-1	302	Sr.	Washington
OL	Tre'Vour Wallace-Simms	6-5	330	Sr.	Missouri
OL	Prince Tega Wanogho	6-7	307	Sr.	Auburn

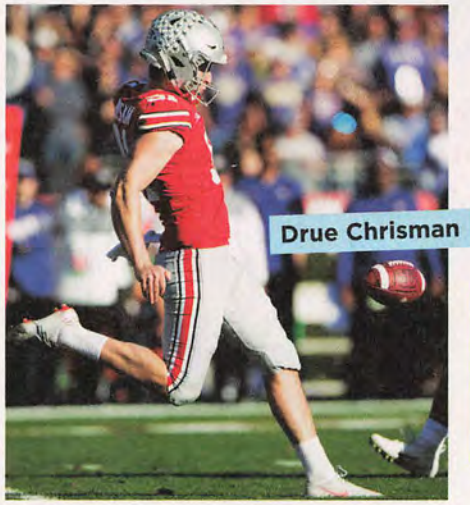
Eno Benjamin

Shaquille Quarterman

DEFENSE

DL	Carter Coughlin	6-4	245	Sr.	Minnesota
DL	Jonathan Garvin	6-4	250	Jr.	Miami
DL	Julian Okwara	6-5	240	Sr.	Notre Dame
DL	Marvin Wilson	6-5	314	Jr.	Florida State
LB	Markus Bailey	6-1	240	Sr.	Purdue
LB	Shaquille Quarterman	6-1	235	Sr.	Miami
LB	David Woodward	6-2	230	Jr.	Utah State
CB	Trajan Bandy	5-9	188	Jr.	Miami
CB	CJ Henderson	6-1	191	Jr.	Florida
S	Andre Cisco	6-0	198	So.	Syracuse
S	Jordan Fuller	6-2	205	Sr.	Ohio State


Markus Bailey


Drue Chrisman

SPECIALISTS

K	Cooper Rothe	5-11	178	Sr.	Wyoming
P	Drue Chrisman	6-3	220	Jr.	Ohio State
KR	Jason Huntley	5-9	188	Sr.	New Mexico State
PR	Pop Williams	5-9	172	Sr.	Memphis

Benjamin, Chrisman: Peter Brouillet; Quarterman: Tom DiPace; Bailey: Donald Page

THE 19TH ANNUAL ATHLON SPORTS UNIT RANKINGS

TEE HIGGINS & JUSTYN ROSS

ACC

	QB	RB	WR/TE	OL	DL	LB	DB
BOSTON COLLEGE	7	2	12	11	13	6	14
CLEMSON	1	1	1	1	1	2	2
DUKE	12	10	13	7	10	14	6
FLORIDA STATE	5	3	4	14	4	5	5
GEORGIA TECH	14	5	14	13	14	13	13
LOUISVILLE	13	13	6	12	11	7	12
MIAMI	9	4	5	10	2	1	4
NORTH CAROLINA	11	8	11	9	8	10	11
NC STATE	10	9	7	4	5	8	8
PITTSBURGH	8	12	10	8	6	9	9
SYRACUSE	3	7	2	3	3	12	3
VIRGINIA	2	14	8	6	9	3	1
VIRGINIA TECH	4	11	3	2	7	4	7
WAKE FOREST	6	6	9	5	12	11	10

AMERICAN

	QB	RB	WR/TE	OL	DL	LB	DB
CINCINNATI	3	1	5	6	6	2	2
CONNECTICUT	12	7	11	7	12	12	12
EAST CAROLINA	11	12	10	9	9	9	10
HOUSTON	1	8	2	3	7	11	9
MEMPHIS	4	3	3	4	2	3	4
NAVY	8	11	12	12	11	10	11
SMU	5	9	4	11	4	6	8
TEMPLE	7	10	7	2	3	1	3
TULANE	9	4	8	8	1	7	6
TULSA	10	6	9	10	10	5	7
UCF	2	2	1	1	8	4	1
USF	6	5	6	5	5	8	5

D'ERIQ KING

JAQUAN BAILEY

BIG 12

	QB	RB	WR/TE	OL	DL	LB	DB
BAYLOR	4	7	4	9	5	5	8
IOWA STATE	3	9	7	5	1	1	3
KANSAS	10	5	10	10	10	10	10
KANSAS STATE	8	10	9	7	4	8	5
OKLAHOMA	2	1	1	1	6	7	9
OKLAHOMA STATE	6	3	2	3	9	3	2
TCU	9	6	5	4	3	6	4
TEXAS	1	2	3	2	2	2	1
TEXAS TECH	5	8	6	6	7	4	6
WEST VIRGINIA	7	4	8	8	8	9	7

Clemson: Getty Images; King: Houston Athletics; Bailey: Tim Umphrey; Fine: North Texas Athletics; Patterson: Bruce Schwartzman; Jones-Davis, Pugh: Northern Illinois Athletics

BIG TEN

	QB	RB	WR/TE	OL	DL	LB	DB
ILLINOIS	14	5	13	7	11	12	14
INDIANA	9	8	7	12	12	14	10
IOWA	4	6	10	2	5	9	3
MARYLAND	8	7	11	10	14	11	12
MICHIGAN	1	10	1	1	4	4	4
MICHIGAN STATE	5	13	5	9	2	2	5
MINNESOTA	12	4	4	8	9	7	9
NEBRASKA	3	9	9	6	8	10	6
NORTHWESTERN	10	12	12	14	6	3	8
OHIO STATE	2	2	2	4	1	6	1
PENN STATE	6	3	6	5	3	1	2
PURDUE	7	14	3	11	7	5	11
RUTGERS	13	11	14	13	13	13	13
WISCONSIN	11	1	8	3	10	8	7

SHEA PATTERSON

MASON FINE

CONFERENCE USA

	QB	RB	WR/TE	OL	DL	LB	DB
CHARLOTTE	10	2	10	11	5	2	11
FAU	7	12	6	3	6	6	5
FIU	2	4	2	2	10	5	2
LOUISIANA TECH	5	9	7	6	3	9	1
MARSHALL	3	5	3	1	1	4	4
MTSU	12	6	5	10	7	3	7
NORTH TEXAS	1	3	1	5	9	10	9
OLD DOMINION	9	8	11	13	13	7	12
RICE	14	13	9	14	14	11	13
SOUTHERN MISS	6	10	8	8	2	8	3
UAB	4	1	13	7	11	1	6
UTEP	11	11	14	9	12	14	14
UTSA	13	14	12	12	4	13	10
WKU	8	7	4	4	8	12	8

MID-AMERICAN

	QB	RB	WR/TE	OL	DL	LB	DB
AKRON	8	12	6	11	10	6	11
BALL STATE	9	5	2	4	11	2	7
BOWLING GREEN	3	6	10	10	9	11	12
BUFFALO	11	2	8	1	4	4	3
CENTRAL MICHIGAN	10	7	12	12	7	10	8
EASTERN MICHIGAN	7	8	7	9	8	12	1
KENT STATE	5	9	3	8	12	7	9
MIAMI	12	10	5	7	6	9	4
NORTHERN ILLINOIS	6	4	11	6	1	1	5
OHIO	1	11	9	5	3	5	2
TOLEDO	4	3	4	3	5	8	6
WESTERN MICHIGAN	2	1	1	2	2	3	10

ANTONIO JONES-DAVIS & KYLE PUGH

JORDAN LOVE

MOUNTAIN WEST

	QB	RB	WR/TE	OL	DL	LB	DB
AIR FORCE	6	6	12	2	6	9	8
BOISE STATE	4	3	1	1	1	2	2
COLORADO STATE	5	8	4	11	7	12	9
FRESNO STATE	9	2	8	6	3	4	1
HAWAII	2	12	3	5	5	7	7
NEVADA	11	4	2	9	4	6	6
NEW MEXICO	10	11	9	8	9	10	11
SAN DIEGO STATE	8	1	11	4	10	3	3
SAN JOSE STATE	12	9	10	12	12	8	12
UNLV	3	7	5	3	11	11	10
UTAH STATE	1	5	6	7	2	1	4
WYOMING	7	10	7	10	8	5	5

PAC-12

	QB	RB	WR/TE	OL	DL	LB	DB
ARIZONA	4	4	11	6	11	4	8
ARIZONA STATE	10	2	8	4	10	2	5
CALIFORNIA	11	11	12	11	6	1	1
COLORADO	7	12	4	10	9	10	11
OREGON	1	3	7	1	4	3	4
OREGON STATE	12	5	5	12	12	12	12
STANFORD	2	9	10	8	5	11	10
UCLA	9	6	9	7	8	7	6
USC	6	8	1	9	2	6	9
UTAH	3	1	6	5	1	5	3
WASHINGTON	5	7	2	2	3	8	2
WASHINGTON STATE	8	10	3	3	7	9	7

JUSTIN HERBERT

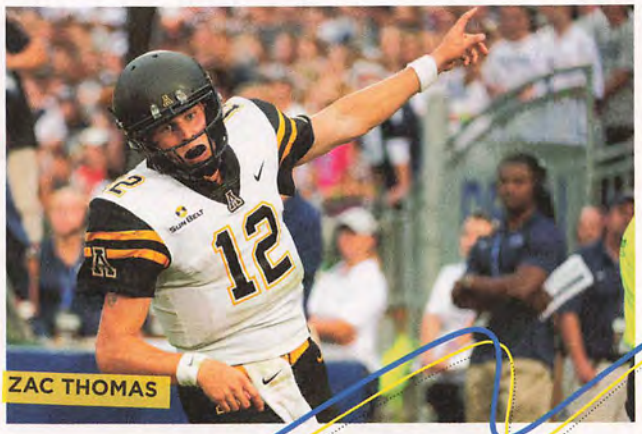
DYLAN MOSES

SEC

	QB	RB	WR/TE	OL	DL	LB	DB
ALABAMA	1	1	1	2	2	1	3
ARKANSAS	13	8	11	14	10	10	13
AUBURN	9	5	7	4	1	9	5
FLORIDA	4	3	2	10	3	5	2
GEORGIA	2	2	9	1	6	2	4
KENTUCKY	12	13	12	6	11	8	14
LSU	7	6	4	5	5	3	1
MISSOURI	6	7	5	3	9	6	10
MISS. STATE	10	11	13	7	8	4	7
OLE MISS	11	9	14	12	12	13	12
SOUTH CAROLINA	5	14	10	9	7	11	8
TENNESSEE	8	10	8	13	13	7	6
TEXAS A&M	3	12	3	8	4	12	9
VANDERBILT	14	4	6	11	14	14	11

SUN BELT

	QB	RB	WR/TE	OL	DL	LB	DB
APPALACHIAN STATE	1	1	2	1	4	1	5
ARKANSAS STATE	8	4	1	5	1	8	2
COASTAL CAROLINA	10	7	7	10	7	9	10
GEORGIA STATE	6	8	3	8	10	10	9
GEORGIA SOUTHERN	4	5	10	6	3	4	1
LOUISIANA	5	2	4	2	8	5	6
SOUTH ALABAMA	9	6	8	9	6	7	8
TEXAS STATE	7	10	6	7	9	2	3
TROY	2	3	5	3	2	3	4
ULM	3	9	9	4	5	6	7


ZAC THOMAS

NATIONAL UNIT RANKINGS

QUARTERBACKS	RUNNING BACKS	RECEIVERS
1. Alabama	1. Alabama	1. Alabama
2. Clemson	2. Georgia	2. Clemson
3. Texas	3. Clemson	3. Oklahoma
4. Georgia	4. Oklahoma	4. USC
5. Oregon	5. Wisconsin	5. Michigan
6. Oklahoma	6. Florida	6. Ohio State
7. Michigan	7. Ohio State	7. Florida
8. Ohio State	8. Boston College	8. Oklahoma State
9. Nebraska	9. Penn State	9. Texas A&M
10. Texas A&M	10. Cincinnati	10. Texas

TUA TAGOVAILOA

OFFENSIVE LINE	DEFENSIVE LINE	LINEBACKERS	DEFENSIVE BACKS
1. Georgia	1. Auburn	1. Alabama	1. LSU
2. Alabama	2. Utah	2. Georgia	2. Florida
3. Clemson	3. Clemson	3. Penn State	3. Alabama
4. Oregon	4. Alabama	4. Miami (Fla.)	4. California
5. Washington	5. Ohio State	5. LSU	5. Ohio State
6. Michigan	6. Michigan State	6. Michigan State	6. Virginia
7. Iowa	7. Penn State	7. California	7. Clemson
8. Missouri	8. Florida	8. Clemson	8. Georgia
9. Auburn	9. Texas A&M	9. Northwestern	9. Washington
10. Wisconsin	10. Notre Dame	10. Michigan	10. Penn State

Herbert: Craig Mitchelldyer; Love: Utah State Athletics; Moses: Harrison McClary; Tua: Crimson Tide Photos/UA Athletics; Thomas: App State Athletics

*15 Things to Watch in 2019

By Matt Hinton

1 Trevor Lawrence is ready for his close-up

Trevor Lawrence arrived at Clemson last winter touted as the most polished freshman passer in ages, and he exceeded the hype at every point. By midseason, he'd relegated the Tigers' incumbent starter, senior Kelly Bryant, to the transfer market; by December, he'd entrenched himself as arguably the best quarterback in the ACC. Then came the playoff, where he laid waste to any and all assumptions about the limitations of a true freshman QB on the sport's biggest stage. With the national title on the line, Lawrence torched Notre Dame and Alabama for a combined 674 yards, six touchdowns and zero interceptions in a pair of eye-opening, blowout wins, cementing his status as both the face of college football in 2019 and the most hotly anticipated prospect at the next level since Andrew Luck.

The really terrifying part: Lawrence's supporting cast consisted overwhelmingly of fellow underclassmen, including the ACC's leading rusher (Travis Etienne) and two elite receivers (Justyn Ross and Tee Higgins), each of whom were just getting acquainted. Elsewhere, Clemson suffered serious attrition along both lines of scrimmage, especially on defense, which was hit with the wholesale departure of one of the most decorated fronts in recent memory. As long as Lawrence is behind center, though, the Tigers are front-runners to repeat as national champs — with a potential three-peat very much on the horizon.

2 Saban starts over (again) with revamped staff

The flip side of Lawrence's star turn in the national championship game was the shocking collapse on the opposite sideline: The 44–16 final in Santa Clara marked the most lopsided defeat in Nick Saban's entire 12-year tenure at Alabama, at a point on the calendar when the Crimson Tide had grown accustomed to being the dominators rather than the dominated. In response, Saban sent first-year defensive coordinator Tosh Lupoi packing for the NFL, completing a mass exodus from the Bama coaching staff that also included offensive coordinator Mike Locksley (the new head coach at Maryland) and quarterbacks coach Dan Enos, who was in line to fill Locksley's seat as the chief play caller until he opted to leave for the OC job at Miami instead.

Not that attrition is anything new for Saban, who's used to watching his assistants leave for greener pastures at nearly the same rate his players leave for the NFL Draft. Even by Bama standards, though, the brain drain over the past two years has been dramatic. This winter marked the third consecutive offseason Saban found himself in the market for new coordinators on both sides of the ball. (Contrast that with Clemson, for example, where Dabo Swinney has replaced just one outgoing coordinator since 2012 and promoted from within to do it.) As usual, the departures haven't diminished Saban's unstoppable recruiting machine, and Alabama's depth chart will likely remain the envy of the sport for the foreseeable future. But the faces in charge have never been more in flux.

Lawrence: Mike Comer/Getty; Saban: Harrison McClary

Georgia: Third time's the charm?

3

Within the SEC, the primary threat to Alabama's ongoing supremacy is still the team built most deliberately in the Crimson Tide's image: Georgia. In three years in Athens, Kirby Smart has assembled a year-in, year-out recruiting operation that rivals the one he observed up close as a longtime Saban assistant, yielding a roster that stacks up athletically against Bama's as well as any in the nation. Now, the only step left in the Bulldogs' push to supplant the Tide as the league's standard bearer is to actually, you know, beat the Tide.

The two Bama-Georgia meetings that bookended 2018 — the 2017 College Football Playoff National Championship in January and the rematch for the SEC crown in December — both went down to the wire, with Alabama prevailing in dramatic fashion. For Georgia, though, a proud program still longing for its first national title in nearly four decades, the missed opportunities sting even more: In both games, UGA cruised to a two-touchdown lead in the third quarter, only to be outscored by a combined 30–3 in the fourth quarter and overtime. Talent-wise, the 2019 Bulldogs should be on par with the 2017-18 editions, if not better. Still, with quarterback Jake Fromm likely off to the NFL after this season, and with no obvious heir apparent behind him in the wake of Justin Fields' transfer, their window may be as open now as it's going to get.

*4 *Contenders cast their lots with free agent QBs*

Attrition behind center is an inescapable fact of life, one coaches have traditionally managed by promoting homegrown talent to fill the void. For contenders in win-now mode, though, the old-fashioned, in-house pipeline is increasingly taking a back seat to a transfer market bordering on full-fledged free agency. Of the dozen teams that played in a New Year's Six bowl game in 2018, fully half of them — Ohio State, Oklahoma, LSU, UCF, Washington and Michigan — will rely this fall on a transfer QB who was either a) a full-time starter at his previous school; b) a former five-star prospect out of high school; or c) both. None of them will turn the offense over to a new starter they actually signed as a recruit.

The most decorated of the free agent class, **Jalen Hurts (above)**, led Alabama to back-to-back playoff appearances in 2016-17; he opted to take his 25–2 record as a starter to Oklahoma, where he'll have every opportunity to reclaim his star power after playing second banana last season to Tua Tagovailoa. The most talented, Justin Fields, showed flashes of his blue-chip potential last year as Jake Fromm's understudy at Georgia, then leapt at the chance this offseason to become the starter at Ohio State. Another erstwhile Georgia headliner, Jacob Eason, is set to take over at Washington after watching the Huskies' 2018 Rose Bowl run from the sideline. Washington State will replace last year's wildly successful grad transfer, Gardner Minshew, with another, Gage Gubrud, who starred at Eastern Washington. UCF will turn to former Notre Dame starter **Brandon Wimbush (left)** to fill the vacancy left by a severe knee injury to incumbent McKenzie Milton.

Beyond the top 25, the list includes Kelly Bryant (from Clemson to Missouri), Josh Jackson (Virginia Tech to Maryland), Shane Buechele (Texas to SMU), Ben Hicks (SMU to Arkansas), Nick Starkel (Texas A&M to Arkansas), and Alex Delton (Kansas State to TCU), with more surely to come as the season approaches.

UGA: Paul Abell; Wimbush: Tom Lynn; Hurts: Harrison McClary

5 Justin Herbert sticks around

With so many high-profile signal callers on the move, Oregon's Justin Herbert is a member of an endangered species: an NFL-ready quarterback who actually sticks around for his senior year. Had he opted for this year's draft, Herbert — a mobile, 6'5", 230-pound slinger with 28 career starts to his credit at his hometown school — was a virtual lock to go in the first round, and he may have been the first QB off the board. Instead, he'll aim to close his college career by leading the Ducks to their first Pac-12 title in five years.

Statistically, Herbert has plenty of room for improvement as a senior after watching his completion rate dip below 60 percent last year, right around the national average. Still, the risks of returning to school are obvious: In addition to injury concerns, there's also the fact that no FBS quarterback who exhausted his eligibility at a single school has gone in the first round since 2013 (Florida State's EJ Manuel). Players with franchise-QB potential typically don't need an additional season to prove it. In Herbert's case, though, he clearly has the physical gifts to break that streak, and if the production follows suit, there's little doubt he will.

6 The Pac-12 gets no respect

Justin Herbert's return is one of the few pieces of good news for a league in an extended slump. On the field, the Pac-12 champ has missed the playoff cut in three of the past four seasons and landed outside of the final AP top 10 in each of the past two. Both of the conference's L.A. bellwethers, USC and UCLA, are coming off their worst seasons in ages despite playing in a wide-open South Division that didn't place a single team in the final polls. In the North, once-ascendant programs at Stanford and Oregon have dropped off the national radar.

Off the field, the news has been worse. The conference was embarrassed last season after a "third party" in the home office interfered in the instant-replay process during a nationally televised game. Meanwhile, commissioner Larry Scott faced criticism for free-spending habits (compared to his Power 5 peers) that haven't yielded corresponding results. Pac-12 revenue continues to lag behind the SEC, Big Ten and Big 12, while the league's cable-TV network is reportedly losing subscribers. Many of the biggest Pac-12 games are played on hard-to-find channels or in notoriously late-night time slots that deter the rest of the country from tuning in. Rather than serving as a showcase for the conference, last November's Pac-12 Championship Game — a defensive slog between Washington and Utah with no broader implications for the playoff race — unfolded in a half-empty stadium on a Friday night.

This year, the Pac-12 will open the season again without an obvious front-runner or national contender. The positive spin on that is the opportunity for a legitimately unpredictable conference race: Oregon and Washington each have a roughly equal chance of winning the North, and the South could plausibly wind up in almost any order. The best-case, any-given-season scenario for the conference's reputation is for the best of the Big Two in the North to generate sustained playoff buzz opposite a resurgent, talent-rich powerhouse at USC or UCLA. And, hey, it could always happen.

Herbert: Craig Mitchelldyer; Pac-12, Notre Dame: Icon Sportswire via Getty Images; Clemson: AP

7 The All-Clemson Conference

There isn't merely the lack of a challenger to Clemson's annual perch at the top of the standings: The other would-be pillars of ACC stability are all in disarray. Florida State is at its lowest point in decades, having just posted its first losing record in 42 years in coach Willie Taggart's debut. Ditto Virginia Tech, where the Hokies came in below .500 last year for the first time since 1992. Miami's brief resurgence under Mark Richt turned out to be a mirage; after a 10–0 start in 2017, the Canes are just 7–9 over their last 16 games, prompting Richt's abrupt retirement last December. Georgia Tech is starting from scratch after Paul Johnson's retirement. Louisville, fresh from the high of the Lamar Jackson years, ditched Bobby Petrino in the wake of a shocking 2–10 debacle in 2018. North Carolina sent Larry Fedora packing after a 5–18 record over the past two seasons.

For now, the league's only other clearly ascendant program is Syracuse, the only other ACC team to finish in the top 25. But the Orange have some key personnel to replace, and none of the usual suspects appears to be poised for a quick turnaround. FSU dismissed arguably its best offensive player, quarterback Deondre Francois, and still has serious issues on its offensive line. Miami's outlook behind center hasn't improved. UNC is betting on 67-year-old Mack Brown to reenact the dramatic, ground-up rebuild he pulled off in his first go-round in Chapel Hill, from 1988-97, in less time, after five years away from coaching. If the relatively stable outfits at Virginia, Pitt or Boston College have a 10-win, top-25-ish season in them any time soon, this looks like the perfect year to make good.

8 Texas is back! For real this time?

Yes, you've heard the hype before. No, that doesn't make it any less real: Entering its third season under coach Tom Herman, Texas is widely regarded as a serious Big 12 contender and a plausible College Football Playoff dark horse. The Longhorns are a virtual lock to open the season in the top 10, where they finished in 2018 (No. 9 in the final AP poll) for the first time in nearly a decade.

The most direct cause for optimism is the return of junior QB Sam Ehlinger, a tenacious athlete who also improved dramatically last season as a passer and who saved some of his best performances for upset wins over Oklahoma (in the regular season) and Georgia (in the Sugar Bowl). As long as he's healthy, Ehlinger is Texas' first truly entrenched, no-questions-asked starter behind center since Colt McCoy, and he remains right on schedule for a breakthrough campaign in Year 3. More broadly, Herman's long-term rebuild is right on schedule as well: With the departure of roughly half of last year's starting lineup, the depth chart will be stocked mainly with Herman's own recruits, drawn largely from classes that ranked in the top three nationally (per 247Sports) each of the past two years. The 2018 crop has already yielded a pair of emerging stars in running back Keaontay Ingram and defensive back Caden Sterns. The arrow is clearly pointing up; an early visit from LSU could be a reality check, or the catalyst that sends the Horns' stock through the roof.

*9 Notre Dame: Built to last, or back to square one?

In most respects — 12–0 regular season, playoff bid, top-5 finish — 2018 was a banner season for Notre Dame. But the ending, a 30–3 thumping at the hands of Clemson in the Cotton Bowl, was more than just a bad turn on a big stage: To much of the country, it was the latest in a long line of big-game flops that proved (again) that the Fighting Irish never really belonged on the stage in the first place. Since 2000, Notre Dame is 0–6 in major bowls under three different head coaches, losing by an average margin of 24 points.

The last time the Irish took it on the chin with a championship at stake, an unforgettable 42–14 humiliation against Alabama in 2012, they promptly disappeared from the national conversation, regressing to 9–4 the following season and 8–5 the year after that. This time around, they should be in better shape, largely due to the steady presence of quarterback Ian Book, a veteran offensive line and a proven pass rush. The deeper issue, though, concerns the overall talent level relative to other contenders, especially at the skill positions, which will remain a liability until proven otherwise in a head-to-head, winner-take-all context. A September trip to Georgia doesn't quite rise to that level, but if the Irish are going to have any chance of redemption in late December, a test from a blue-chip outfit like UGA is one they need to pass.

10

Has Harbaugh hit his ceiling at Michigan?

Obviously, the Wolverines are better off in 2019 than they were four years ago. But what do they have to show for it? For all the hype surrounding Jim Harbaugh's return to his alma mater, the Harbaugh era has yielded zero championships, an 0–2 mark in major bowl games, and (worst of all) an 0–4 record against Ohio State, punctuated last November by a 62–39 shocker in Columbus that took the Buckeyes' domination of the rivalry to a new level. Prior to that collapse, the prevailing mood toward the Wolverines was not if, but when; the big breakthrough on Harbaugh's watch was only a matter of time. Entering Year 5, that sense of inevitability is long gone.

On the bright side, the foundation remains solid, and the Big Ten is ripe for the taking. Ohio State is under new management (see right). Michigan State and Wisconsin suf-

fered through even bigger letdowns in 2018 than Michigan; Penn State also took a slight step back and will be breaking in a new quarterback. Meanwhile, the Wolverines boast a senior QB (Shea Patterson), a deep receiving corps, a veteran offensive line, and one of the most respected defensive coordinators in the country (Don Brown). Their toughest tests this fall, OSU and Notre Dame, are both in Ann Arbor. Michigan fans are desperate to take the next step, and at this point, another close-but-no-cigar kind of campaign will feel all too familiar.

11

Starting over in the Sunflower State

The mandate for new head coaches at Kansas and Kansas State is considerably less intense, to put it mildly, but in their own way, the cross-state rivals made two of the more intriguing hires of the cycle.

In Lawrence, the Jayhawks made a rare splash by tapping one of the most familiar faces in the college game, former LSU coach Les Miles, to oversee its most perennially dire rebuilding job. Before things soured in Baton Rouge, Miles was arguably the best coach in school history, delivering a national championship, seven 10-win seasons and the highest overall winning percentage at LSU (.770) in more than a century. After two full years on the shelf, he's setting his sights a little lower — ok, fine, a lot lower: The last three guys who had his office managed a grand total of five conference wins in nine seasons. If Miles, now 65, manages to snap KU's decade-long bowl drought before calling it a career, it will be a minor miracle.

The job awaiting Chris Klieman at K-State is at least as daunting, for entirely different reasons. The guy he's replacing, Bill Snyder, is a local legend who effectively built a modern football program from scratch — his name is literally on the stadium — over the course of a decorated, 30-year tenure. Klieman has some experience on this front: At his last job, North Dakota State, he replaced a departing coach (Craig Bohl) who'd just led NDSU to its third consecutive FCS national championship; on Klieman's watch, the Bison went on to win four more titles over the next five years, with a recruiting base very similar to the one he'll be mining in Manhattan. Kansas State isn't about to start filling up the trophy case in the Big 12, but if Klieman's Wildcats are consistently as good as his fundamentally sound outfits at NDSU, then he's going to be around a while himself.

12

A New Day at Ohio State

For a guy in one of the most coveted jobs in the sport, new Ohio State coach Ryan Day is a blank slate: At 40, he's the youngest permanent head coach in Columbus in more than 60 years and the first since World War II to assume the top job with no prior head coaching experience on any level. And while OSU is certainly paying him like an established vet — Day's $4.5 million salary is more than many proven winners, including Stanford's David Shaw, Washington's Chris Petersen and Michigan State's Mark Dantonio — he has as much to prove in his new role as any first-year coach in the nation.

Of course, Ohio State remains Ohio State: Coaches come and go, but the expectations stay the same. Despite significant losses from last year's Rose Bowl run, the Buckeyes' year-in, year-out recruiting prowess under Day's mentor, Urban Meyer, ensures that there won't be any drop-off in terms of talent or depth — not even at quarterback, where the unexpected void left by Dwayne Haskins' early departure for the NFL was immediately filled by Justin Fields, a former five-star prospect. Day also represents continuity from the Meyer regime, having spent the last two years as offensive coordinator and briefly served as the interim boss last season while Meyer served a three-game suspension. As usual, the loaded Buckeyes will be in the hunt to win the Big Ten East title. As long as that's still the case, Day ought to be fine; as soon as it's not, the dream job will turn into a pressure cooker in a hurry.

Harbaugh: Harrison McClary; KU, KSU: Orlin Wagner/AP; Holgorsen, Army: Getty Images

*13 Houston, Holgorsen hit reset

At first blush, the reports that Dana Holgorsen was seriously considering an overture from Houston after eight seasons at West Virginia didn't quite add up. What coach leaves an apparently secure seat at a Power 5 school for a Group of 5 gig? Look deeper, though, and his decision to leave Morgantown for H-Town made sense. For starters, eight years anywhere is a long time in the coaching biz, especially at a program that isn't any closer to a Big 12 crown than it was when it joined the league in 2012. And while Houston may not play in a major conference, it was willing to pony up major-league money, offering a five-year, $20 million contract that topped Holgorsen's salary at WVU and made him the highest-paid Group of 5 head coach, by far. That investment also signaled the university's commitment to continuing its pursuit of a Big 12 invite if the conference opts to expand. (He'll get an additional $1 million if that happens on his watch.) In the meantime, Holgorsen will have ready access to one of the nation's most fertile concentrations of D-I talent, and Houston will have a coach who's unlikely to treat the job as a stepping stone. Sounds like the basis of a healthy relationship.

14 Malzahn gets hands-on

At its best, Auburn's offense under Gus Malzahn is a balanced, up-tempo attack that ties defenses in knots with a mobile quarterback, an emphasis on churning out yards between the tackles and an array of weapons with quick-strike capabilities. At its worst, it looks like it did in 2018: plodding, one-dimensional, and devoid of difference-makers. In SEC play, the Tigers set new Malzahn-era lows for both yards per game (328.0) and per play (5.1) while just barely edging the 2015 edition in scoring (22.3 ppg). Compared to 2017, quarterback Jarrett Stidham's efficiency rating vs. conference opponents plunged by more than 40 points; on the ground, Auburn failed to produce an individual 1,000-yard rusher for the first time in a decade.

It's no wonder, then, that the prevailing sentiment this offseason was … uh, optimism? Believe it, and not only because there's nowhere to go but up. The good vibes began with Malzahn himself, who reclaimed play-calling duties for the Music City Bowl and promptly presided over an out-of-nowhere 63-point bonanza against Purdue. Almost everyone who touched the ball for the Tigers in that game will be back, along with a fully intact offensive line consisting of five fifth-year seniors. And although Stidham and his blue-chip arm have departed for the NFL, whoever survives the four-way duel to replace him will certainly have earned the distinction. With Malzahn back to calling plays full time, there are two possible outcomes: a dramatic rebound that puts the Tigers in the running for a New Year's Six bowl, or another round of speculation over whether his tenure has run its course.

15 Army on the march

No program has come as far over the past five years as Army under Jeff Monken. After a great leap forward in 2016 (from 2–10 to 8–5), the Black Knights are 21–5 over the past two seasons, including a triumphant 2018 campaign that yielded an academy record for wins (11) and Army's highest finish in the AP poll (19th) in 60 years. The Knights nearly upset Oklahoma in September, then finished on a nine-game winning streak, capping it with their third consecutive victory over Navy and a stunning 70–14 annihilation of Houston that tied the record for the most lopsided blowout in bowl history.

If the 2018 team scaled new heights, though, the 2019 edition has a chance to glimpse the pinnacle. Personnel-wise, Army returns the majority of its production on both sides of the ball, especially on offense, where triple-option maestro Kelvin Hopkins Jr. is back after emerging last year as one of the nation's most quietly efficient quarterbacks. Schedule-wise, another uninspiring slate means the Knights should be solidly favored in every game except a Week 2 trip to Michigan. Finish in Ann Arbor what they started last year in Norman, and suddenly the path to mid-major nirvana — an undefeated season, a major bowl bid, an extended debate over exactly where the ceiling for a service-academy outfit should be — will be wide open for the taking.

EXTRA Points

QB Battles

Dillon Sterling-Cole

Arizona State
There is an intriguing battle in Tempe to replace Manny Wilkins, a three-year starter. Second-year coach Herm Edwards can turn to junior Dillon Sterling-Cole or true freshman Jayden Daniels. Sterling-Cole, a former four-star recruit, has thrown a total of 57 passes in his three years at Arizona State. Daniels, the program's highest-regarded QB addition in recent decades, showed promise during spring practices as an early enrollee and is no doubt the QB of the future.
Projected Winner: Sterling-Cole

Arkansas
Second-year coach Chad Morris will choose between two grad transfers and a redshirt freshman as he attempts to jumpstart the Arkansas offense. Ben Hicks, who played for Morris at SMU, has a leg up due to his familiarity with the system — and his production with the Mustangs. Nick Starkel, a starter in Week 1 as a redshirt freshman at Texas A&M in 2017, is an intriguing option because he has two years of eligibility. Also in the mix is redshirt freshman Connor Noland, who started the Hogs' win over Tulsa last year.
Projected Winner: Hicks

Malik Willis

Auburn
Gus Malzahn has three options to fill the void created by Jarrett Stidham's early departure: junior Malik Willis (Stidham's backup the last two years), redshirt freshman Joey Gatewood (who shined in the Music City Bowl last December) and five-star true freshman Bo Nix (the son of former Tiger QB Patrick Nix). Whoever emerges will have a significant impact on just how successful the Tigers can be this season.
Projected Winner: Willis

Boise State
The Broncos leaned on Brett Rypien for the past four seasons. Five scholarship quarterbacks with a combined 10 career pass attempts were on hand for spring drills. Coach Bryan Harsin doesn't plan on naming a starter until mid-August. Dual-threat sophomore Chase Cord has the most experience, though he tore his ACL in October. True freshman Hank Bachmeier enrolled early and is one of the most highly touted recruits ever to sign with Boise State.
Projected Winner: Cord

Miami (Fla.)
Few programs are as starved for improved quarterback play as Miami. With even average play from the position, the Hurricanes could have won two or three more games last fall. N'Kosi Perry did nothing as a redshirt freshman in 2018 to suggest he's the long-term answer at the position. Redshirt freshman Jarren Williams is also in the mix, but the smart money is on Tate Martell, a former five-star recruit who transferred from Ohio State and gained immediate eligibility.
Projected Winner: Martell

Minnesota
Zack Annexstad made headlines last fall when he was named QB1 in Week 1 at Minnesota as a true freshman walk-on. He started the first seven games before going down with an injury. Tanner Morgan, then a redshirt freshman, stepped in and guided the Golden Gophers to a strong 4–2 finish. Annexstad seems to be the better pure passer, while the shorter Morgan tends to create more with his legs.
Projected Winner: Annexstad

Sterling-Cole: Craig Mitchelldyer; Willis: Harrison McClary

Matt McKay

NC State
Few battles are as wide open as the competition to replace Ryan Finley, who is finally off to the NFL after six years in college (three at Boise State, three at NC State). Third-year sophomore Matt McKay, Finley's backup last season, has the most experience in the system. But Devin Leary (No. 230 in the 2018 class by Rivals) and junior college transfer Bailey Hockman (No. 180 by ESPN in the '17 class) were more touted coming out of high school. Hockman began his career at Florida State but transferred to junior college last fall (but did not play).
Projected Winner: McKay

Oklahoma State
There is a two-man race to replace Taylor Cornelius to run the attack in Stillwater. Senior Dru Brown was a grad transfer from Hawaii who had designs to start last season but was redshirted. Redshirt freshman Spencer Sanders was the gem of the Cowboys' 2018 recruiting class, a dual threat who was named the Gatorade Player of the Year in Texas as a senior.
Projected Winner: Sanders

TCU
Coaxing improved play out of the QB position is a top priority for TCU, which has finished eighth in the Big 12 in passing in each of the past two seasons. There could be as many as four candidates for the job: Alex Delton, a grad transfer from Kansas State who is known more for his running than his passing; Justin Rogers, the top prospect in the Frogs' 2018 recruiting class; junior Mike Collins, a surprise four-game starter last fall; and incoming freshman Max Duggan, a four-star recruit.
Projected Winner: Rogers

UCF
With McKenzie Milton sidelined for the 2019 season after a gruesome leg injury, UCF will turn to either Darriel Mack Jr., who started the final two games of the '18 season (one good game, one not so good) or Brandon Wimbush, a grad transfer from Notre Dame who went 13–3 as a starter in South Bend. Mack has more experience in UCF's system, but Wimbush appears to be the perfect fill-in until Milton returns in 2020.
Projected Winner: Wimbush

Virginia Tech
Josh Jackson, the opening day starter in each of the past two seasons, is now at Maryland. Ryan Willis, who started the final 10 games in 2018, is considered to be the favorite, but coach Justin Fuente says he will not name a starter until preseason camp. That leaves the door open for Quincy Patterson, a redshirt freshman who saw action in three games last year, and Hendon Hooker, a third-year sophomore, to compete for the position.
Projected Winner: Willis

Wake Forest
Sam Hartman started the first nine games in 2018 as a true freshman before going down with a season-ending leg injury. In stepped Jamie Newman, who guided the Demon Deacons to a 3–1 record down the stretch, with wins over NC State, Duke and Memphis (in the bowl game). Veteran coach Dave Clawson has a tough decision. One plus for Newman, now a junior: At 6'4", 235 pounds, he's proven he can take a pounding — and that's important for a program that has trouble keeping its quarterbacks healthy.
Projected Winner: Newman

Washington State
Washington State struck gold last fall with graduate transfer Gardner Minshew, so Mike Leach went back to the well and signed Gage Gubrud, a former FCS All-American who accumulated more than 11,000 yards of offense in his time at Eastern Washington. To win the job, Gubrud has to overcome an ankle injury that kept him out most of the spring and beat out two eager seniors — Anthony Gordon and Trey Tinsley — who've spent significantly more time with Leach's playbook.
Projected Winner: Gubrud

West Virginia
New coach Neal Brown must identify the successor to Will Grier, one of the most productive quarterbacks in college football the past two seasons. The biggest name is Austin Kendall, a grad transfer (with two years of eligibility) who bolted Oklahoma when the Sooners started to flirt with Jalen Hurts. But don't rule out Jack Allison, a transfer from Miami (Fla.), or Trey Lowe III, a dual threat who redshirted last season (though he did play in the bowl game).
Projected Winner: Kendall

Wisconsin
There is a two-man battle to replace the maligned Alex Hornibrook, who left Madison with one season of eligibility remaining (grad transfer at Florida State). The people's choice is true freshman Graham Mertz, a top-75 national recruit from Kansas who was ranked the No. 3 pro-style QB by 247Sports. The people, however, don't name a starting quarterback. The head coach does, and in this case, the smart money is on Jack Coan, a junior who appeared in five games in 2018.
Projected Winner: Coan

Jamie Newman

McKay: Joe Robbins/Getty; Newman: Walter G. Arce Sr.

QB TRANSFERS

Kelly Bryant

15 OTHER NOTABLE TRANSFERS

Abdul Adams, RB
Oklahoma to Syracuse

Bubba Bolden, DB
USC to Miami (Fla.)

Manny Bowen, LB
Penn State to Utah

Parker Braun, OL
Georgia Tech to Texas

Darrion Daniels, DL
Oklahoma State to Nebraska

Mike Danna, DL
Central Michigan to Michigan

James Gilbert, RB
Ball State to Kansas State

Jonathan Greenard, LB
Louisville to Florida

Addison Gumbs, LB
Oklahoma to Oregon State

Jonah Jackson, OL
Rutgers to Ohio State

Trishton Jackson, WR
Michigan State to Syracuse

Juwan Johnson, WR
Penn State to Oregon

Jalen McCleskey, WR
Oklahoma State to Tulane

Lamonte McDougle, DL
West Virginia to Washington State

K.J. Osborn, WR
Buffalo to Miami (Fla.)

Kelly Bryant, Clemson to Missouri

Bryant was one of the top dual-threat quarterbacks in the nation in 2017, his lone season as the full-time starter at Clemson. He opened '18 as the starter but was replaced by true freshman Trevor Lawrence in late September and left the team after the fourth game to preserve his final season of eligibility. At Missouri, Bryant will replace four-year starter Drew Lock.

Shane Buechele, Texas to SMU

Buechele started as a true freshman in 2016 and shared the job in '17 with Sam Ehlinger. But he played in only two games last fall and opted to leave Austin, doing so with two years of eligibility. He will have the opportunity to put up big numbers playing for Sonny Dykes at SMU.

Jacob Eason, Georgia to Washington

One of two quarterbacks on this list who lost his job to Jake Fromm, Eason returned home to the state of Washington after two seasons at Georgia. He started 12 games as a true freshman in 2016 but was injured early in his sophomore season and did not start another game with the Bulldogs.

Justin Fields, Georgia to Ohio State

The No. 1 quarterback in the Class of 2018 played sparingly in his one season at Georgia, completing 27-of-39 passing attempts for 328 yards and rushing 42 times for 266 yards. Granted immediate eligibility, Fields will be a true sophomore at Ohio State in 2019.

Gage Gubrud, Eastern Washington to Washington State

Mike Leach has dipped back into the grad transfer well after having great success with Gardner Minshew last season. In 2016, Gubrud set single-season FCS records for passing yards (5,160) and passing TDs (48). He played in five games last year (one more than the allotted limit to redshirt) but received a waiver to play to play in 2019.

Ben Hicks, SMU to Arkansas

Hicks put up big numbers in three seasons at SMU — the first two for current Arkansas coach Chad Morris — but was benched late last year. He will play his final season for Morris, the coach who recruited him out of Waco, Texas.

Jalen Hurts, Alabama to Oklahoma

Hurts, the SEC Offensive Player of the Year as a freshman in 2016, was relegated to backup duty in 2018 at Alabama. Now, he will be the starter at Oklahoma, the school that has produced the last two Heisman Trophy winners.

Josh Jackson, Virginia Tech to Maryland

Jackson started 13 games as a redshirt freshman in 2017 for the Hokies but was limited to three games this past season due to injury. A grad transfer with two years of eligibility remaining, Jackson will battle junior Tyrrell Pigrome for the starting assignment.

Hunter Johnson, Clemson to Northwestern

Johnson was a five-star signee in Clemson's 2017 recruiting class but got lost in the shuffle with the Tigers. He played 76 snaps over seven games as a true freshman, completing 21-of-27 passes for 234 yards and two touchdowns. He will have three years of eligibility at Northwestern.

Austin Kendall, Oklahoma to West Virginia

Kendall waited patiently behind Baker Mayfield and Kyler Murray — two Heisman Trophy winners — but decided to leave Oklahoma when it became clear the Sooners were recruiting Jalen Hurts as a grad transfer. Kendall is expected to start for new coach Neal Brown at West Virginia and will have two years of eligibility.

Riley Neal, Ball State to Vanderbilt

Neal started 32 games over four seasons at Ball State, throwing for a total of 7,393 yards — with 46 TDs and 25 INTs — and rushing for 1,363. He will head into the fall as the favorite to start at Vanderbilt and will give the Commodores a new look thanks to his mobility.

Tate Martell, Ohio State to Miami (Fla.)

Martell originally committed to Texas A&M before signing with Ohio State. He bolted Columbus after Justin Fields announced his transfer from Georgia and — like Fields — was granted immediate eligibility for 2019.

Zach Smith, Baylor to Tulsa

A former top-300 national recruit, Smith started 10 games in two seasons at Baylor. At Tulsa, he will play for Philip Montgomery, who recruited Smith to Baylor while serving as the Bears' offensive coordinator.

Nick Starkel, Texas A&M to Arkansas

Starkel was solid, when healthy, as a redshirt freshman in 2017 in the final season of the Kevin Sumlin era. He lost a QB competition to Kellen Mond under the new coaching staff and played sparingly last fall.

Brandon Wimbush, Notre Dame to UCF

Wimbush started 12 games in 2017 but was replaced last season by Ian Book. He's a good fit at UCF, which lost McKenzie Milton to a serious knee injury late last season. Wimbush will have only one season of eligibility.

Bryant: Zach Bland; Adams, Tate: Peter Brouillet

HEISMAN WATCH

1. Tua Tagovailoa, QB, Alabama

Tagovailoa was spectacular as a sophomore, posting numbers that would have won him the Heisman Trophy in almost any other season. Despite rarely playing in the fourth quarter, he threw for 3,966 yards, averaged 11.2 yards per attempt (second nationally to Heisman winner Kyler Murray) and threw for 43 touchdowns (second to the other Heisman finalist, Dwayne Haskins) with only six interceptions. With a star-studded cast of receivers back, expect more gaudy numbers from Tua in 2019.

Trevor Lawrence

2. Trevor Lawrence, QB, Clemson

The highest-rated quarterback prospect of the Internet recruiting era lived up to the hype in his first season on campus. Clemson struggled in Lawrence's first start — a 27–23 win in Week 5 over Syracuse led by backup Chase Brice (Lawrence was injured late in the second quarter) — then proceeded to win the next 10 games, including two in the College Football Playoff, by an average of 36.1 points. For the season, the Georgia native with the flaxen locks threw for 3,280 yards, averaged 8.3 yards per attempt and had a 30-to-4 TD-to-INT ratio. He figures to be the among the best players in college football the next two seasons.

3. Jonathan Taylor, RB, Wisconsin

Can a 2,000-yard season fly under the radar? If so, that was the case in 2018 for Taylor, who led the nation with 2,194 yards on a 7.1-yard average while playing in an offense that struggled to throw the ball. Taylor, who topped 200 yards five times last season, has rushed for 4,171 yards in two seasons.

4. Justin Herbert, QB, Oregon

Herbert is back for his senior season at Oregon despite reports that he would have been among the top QBs in the 2019 NFL Draft class. The Eugene native threw for 3,151 yards with 29 touchdowns and eight interceptions as a junior, his first season starting more than eight games.

5. Sam Ehlinger, QB, Texas

Ehlinger beat out Shane Buechele for the starting assignment last fall and guided the Longhorns to their first 10-win season since 2009. He was efficient as a passer (64.7 percent, 3,292 yards, 25 TDs, five INTs) and ranked second among all QBs nationally with 16 rushing touchdowns. A big season by Texas will make Ehlinger a strong candidate to reach New York.

6. Travis Etienne, RB, Clemson

While most of the national attention focused on quarterback Trevor Lawrence and Clemson's dynamic defensive line, Etienne quietly went about his business and rushed for 1,658 yards (on an 8.1-yard average) and led the nation with 24 rushing touchdowns.

7. Jake Fromm, QB, Georgia

Fromm has shown steady improvement in his two seasons at Georgia. As a sophomore, he completed 67.3 percent of his passes, averaged 9.0 yards per attempt and threw 30 touchdowns with only six interceptions. He will be working with a new offensive coordinator and a retooled crop of pass catchers in 2019.

8. Jalen Hurts, QB, Oklahoma

Hurts, the SEC Offensive Player of the Year as a true freshman at Alabama in 2016, will be the quarterback for a school that has produced the last two Heisman Trophy winners. That's enough to earn him a spot on this list.

9. Justin Fields, QB, Ohio State

The top quarterback recruit in the Class of 2018 has made the move from Athens to Columbus and figures to thrive in an Ohio State offense that has led the Big Ten in yards per game in five of the past six seasons. Fields was used sparingly in his one season at Georgia, completing 69.2 percent of his 39 passes for 328 yards and four touchdowns while adding 266 yards and four scores on the ground.

10. Shea Patterson, QB, Michigan

Patterson brought some much-needed stability to the quarterback position at Michigan in his first season in Ann Arbor. He threw for 2,600 yards and 22 TDs while adding 273 yards on the ground. The Wolverines will need a big season from their senior QB to knock off mighty Ohio State in the Big Ten East.

11. Najee Harris, RB, Alabama
12. Ian Book, QB, Notre Dame
13. Adrian Martinez, QB, Nebraska
14. D'Andre Swift, RB, Georgia
15. J.K. Dobbins, RB, Ohio State
16. AJ Dillon, RB, Boston College
17. Rondale Moore, WR, Purdue
18. Khalil Tate, QB, Arizona
19. Jerry Jeudy, WR, Alabama
20. Eno Benjamin, RB, Arizona State
21. Kellen Mond, QB, Texas A&M
22. K.J. Costello, QB, Stanford
23. Tylan Wallace, WR, Oklahoma State
24. Kelly Bryant, QB, Missouri
25. Cam Akers, RB, Florida State

EXTRA Points

Coaches on the **Hot Seat**

Clay Helton

1. Clay Helton, USC (32-17, three-plus seasons)
Helton was never fully embraced by the USC faithful even as he won a Rose Bowl (2016) and Pac-12 title (2017) in his first two full seasons on the job. So it's safe to say his approval rating is at an all-time low after the Trojans slumped to 5-7 in 2018, the school's first losing mark since 2000, the season prior to Pete Carroll's arrival. Helton shook up his staff in the offseason and will be expected to show significant progress this fall.

2. Bob Davie, New Mexico (33-54, seven seasons)
Davie will be back in Albuquerque in 2019 despite winning only one Mountain West game for a second season in a row and after he was suspended by the school for 30 days last spring in the wake of an athletics department investigation into the football program. There's one simple reason for his return: The school could not afford the reported $1.2 million buyout.

3. Chris Ash, Rutgers (7-29, three seasons)
Rutgers seemingly made a bit of progress in 2017, Ash's second season, by winning three Big Ten games, but the Scarlet Knights crashed back to reality by recording an 0–9 league mark last season. The offense was the biggest issue; Rutgers scored 17 points or fewer in all 10 games against FBS opponents and scored only 11 touchdowns in its nine Big Ten games. Not good.

4. Tony Sanchez, UNLV (16-32, four seasons)
The Rebels regressed in 2018, winning only two games in league play after recording a 4–4 mark in the Mountain West in '17. Injuries at quarterback were a big reason for the struggles last fall, as Armani Rogers was limited to only five starts. Pressure is on Sanchez to get things rolling, with the school scheduled to move into the Raiders' new stadium in 2020.

5. Lovie Smith, Illinois (9-28, three seasons)
The Fighting Illini went outside the box with the Smith hire three years ago. It hasn't worked thus far, although the Illinois administration keeps expressing its support for their embattled coach. The most damaging number: four. Smith has managed only four league wins in three seasons while playing in what has been a very weak Big Ten West. The division is getting better, but the Illini — who haven't had a recruiting class ranked in the top 10 in the league in Smith's tenure — are not.

6. Mike Bobo, Colorado State (24-27, four seasons)
Bobo, the longtime offensive coordinator at Georgia, recorded identical marks of 7–6 overall and 5–3 in the Mountain West in each of his first three seasons and was regarded as a potential candidate for several Power 5 jobs. Now, he finds himself on the hot seat after the Rams managed to win only three games in 2018.

7. Mike Neu, Ball State (10-26, three seasons)
It's been rough sledding for Neu at his alma mater, though the Cardinals did take a step forward in 2018 with three MAC wins — two more than the previous two seasons combined. With pressure to win in 2019, Neu will have to find a new quarterback after Riley Neal bolted for Vanderbilt as a grad transfer.

8. Philip Montgomery, Tulsa (21-29, four seasons)
Montgomery's stock was soaring after recording a 10–3 mark in 2016, his second year on the job, but the Golden Hurricane are 5–19 in the last two years and have slipped to the bottom of the food chain in the competitive AAC West. Tulsa averaged more than 500 yards in each of Montgomery's first two seasons but slumped to 377.6 per game last fall, second to last in the league.

9. Gus Malzahn, Auburn (53-27, six seasons)
You can't have a hot seat list without the head coach at Auburn, even one who played in the national title game in his first season and won the SEC West as recently as 2017. There was some rumbling that Malzahn was going to be fired during the 2018 campaign, so it's safe to say he can't afford another losing record in SEC play.

10. Randy Edsall, UConn (4-20, two seasons)
Edsall's second tour of duty in Storrs is not going well — and that is being extremely kind. It's been a struggle on both sides of the ball, but the defense has been especially troublesome. In 2018, the Huskies set two dubious FBS records — most yards allowed per game (617.4) and most points allowed per game (50.4). In two years, UConn has two wins over FBS opponents, Temple and Tulsa in 2017. He does, however, have some job security due to the ongoing financial struggles of the UConn athletic department.

Getting Warm
Steve Addazio, Boston College
Brett Brennan, San Jose State
Matt Luke, Ole Miss
Charlie Strong, South Florida
Chuck Martin, Miami (Ohio)
Bobby Wilder, Old Dominion
Frank Wilson, UTSA

Helton: Peter Brouillet; Grinch: Mike Houck

Top Coordinator Hires

Alex Grinch

1. Alex Grinch, DC, Oklahoma
Grinch did masterful work in his three seasons at Washington State (2015-17) before making the move to Ohio State in 2018 to serve as the Buckeyes' co-coordinator with Greg Schiano. The numbers were not pretty last fall — Ohio State ranked 10th in the Big Ten in total defense — but Grinch has a strong track record and should be a good fit at Oklahoma.

2. Rich Rodriguez, OC, Ole Miss
A pioneer of the read-option, Rodriguez — a former head coach at West Virginia, Michigan and Arizona — is regarded as one of the top offensive minds in the game. Year 1 could be a bit of a struggle; the Rebels lost three NFL-caliber wide receivers, an All-SEC offensive tackle, and a quarterback who threw for 3,918 yards.

3. Kendal Briles, OC, Florida State
Briles comes with some baggage from his days on the Baylor staff, but his offenses have always produced. In two years as the OC at Baylor, the Bears ranked first and third in the Big 12 in total offense; his 2017 offense at FAU led Conference USA; and last year, Houston ranked third in the AAC in total offense.

4. Dan Enos, OC, Miami (Fla.)
Enos was expected to take over as the offensive coordinator at Alabama but bolted to join Manny Diaz's staff at Miami. Enos was the OC at Arkansas from 2015-17 and the head coach at Central Michigan from 2010-14. While he was at Arkansas, the Hogs ranked second ('15), eighth ('16) and ninth ('17) in total offense in the SEC in his three seasons as the play caller.

5. Scottie Hazelton, DC, Kansas State
Hazelton arrives in Manhattan after a successful two-year stint as the defensive coordinator at Wyoming. The Cowboys ranked in the top two in the Mountain West in both yards per play allowed and scoring defense in each of the past two seasons. Hazelton and new K-State head coach Chris Klieman were on the same staff at North Dakota State in 2011; Hazelton was the DC, and Klieman coached the defensive backs.

6. Tom Manning, OC, Iowa State
Manning rejoins Matt Campbell, his old teammate at Mount Union College, for his second go-round as the Cyclones offensive coordinator after spending last season as the tight ends coach with the Indianapolis Colts. In Manning's previous stint in Ames (2016-17), Iowa State recorded the top two passing offenses in school history and had the ninth- and third-highest scoring offenses as well.

7. Jay Bateman, DC, North Carolina
Bateman played a key role in Army's transformation from one of the worst FBS programs in the nation to a team that won 10 games in 2017 and 11 games last fall. The Black Knights ranked in the top 10 nationally in total defense in both 2016 and 2018 and ranked 10th in scoring defense in '18.

8. Sean Gleeson, OC, Oklahoma State
Six years after plucking Mike Yurcich from Division II Shippensburg, Oklahoma State coach Mike Gundy dipped into the FCS ranks for his next play caller. Gleeson comes to Stillwater after two highly successful years as the offensive coordinator at Princeton. Last fall, the Tigers ranked first in FCS in scoring offense (47.0 ppg) and second in total offense (536.8 ypg) en route to a perfect 10–0 record.

9. Andy Ludwig, OC, Utah
The well-traveled Ludwig returns to Salt Lake City for his second tour of duty as the offensive coordinator at Utah. Since leaving the Utes after the 2008 season — a year in which Utah led the Mountain West in scoring (36.9 ppg) — Ludwig has been the coordinator at Cal (2009-10), San Diego State (2011-12), Wisconsin (2013-14) and Vanderbilt (2015-18). Last season, Vanderbilt ranked fourth in the SEC in yards per play (6.3).

10. Jim Chaney, OC, Tennessee
Some will tell you that Chaney was advised by Georgia head coach Kirby Smart to find another job. Others maintain that Chaney left on his own, attracted to Tennessee by a lucrative salary ($1.5 million in Year 1) and an opportunity to live in Knoxville once again (he was the Vols' OC from 2009-12). Either way, Jeremy Pruitt landed a well-respected play caller who has spent nine of the last 10 seasons at various stops in the SEC.

11. Graham Harrell, OC, USC
Embattled USC coach Clay Helton is turning over his offense to the 34-year-old Harrell, a Mike Leach disciple who was the play caller at North Texas the past three seasons. North Texas ranked second in Conference USA in both scoring and total offense in each of the last two years.

12. Phil Longo, OC, North Carolina
Longo's offenses at Ole Miss had a reputation for feasting on inferior opponents, but the numbers are still impressive. The Rebels ranked second in the SEC in both total offense and yards per play in each of his two years at the school. Last fall, Ole Miss topped 600 yards in a game five times.

2019 NEW COACHES

EXTRA Points

1. Scott Satterfield, Louisville

Previous Job: Head Coach, Appalachian State

Satterfield seemed to be a perfect fit at North Carolina, but the Tar Heels opted to bring back Mack Brown. That was great news for Louisville, which hired Satterfield to pick up the pieces after the program imploded at the end of the Bobby Petrino era. Satterfield did a masterful job at his alma mater as it transitioned from the FCS ranks into the Sun Belt Conference. Over the last four seasons, the Mountaineers averaged 10 wins and went a combined 28–4 in league play. They finished first or second in the Sun Belt in total defense each season since joining the league in 2014 and ranked no worse than fourth in total offense in that span. The only knock (and it's a stretch): He has no previous Power 5 experience.

2. Neal Brown, West Virginia

Previous Job: Head Coach, Troy

Losing Dana Holgorsen to Houston was a bit of a blow to West Virginia's ego, but the school responded by luring Brown — one of the most respected Group of 5 coaches — to Morgantown. Brown struggled in Year 1 at Troy (4–8) but won 31 games over the last three seasons, highlighted by wins at LSU (2017) and Nebraska (2018). Brown is regarded as one of the top offensive minds in the game, but his teams at Troy were consistently stronger on the defensive side of the ball. Brown is a Kentucky native who seems to be a good fit culturally at West Virginia.

3. Chris Klieman, Kansas State

Previous Job: Head Coach, North Dakota State

Klieman has the difficult task of replacing the legendary Bill Snyder but appears to be the right man at the right time. He is fresh off an amazing run at North Dakota State, where he went 69–6 in five seasons and won four FCS national titles. Critics will point out that he inherited a championship program from Craig Bohl, but it's hard to poke holes in his résumé. Klieman did a tremendous job recruiting the right type of player to fit his system at NDSU — something that will need to continue at Kansas State.

4. Matt Wells, Texas Tech

Previous Job: Head Coach, Utah State

Texas Tech pried Wells away from his alma mater, where he went 44–34 overall and 30–18 in the Mountain West in six years and twice won 10 games in a season. Wells enjoyed immediate success after taking over for Gary Andersen, winning 19 games in his first two years, then suffered through three straight losing seasons. The Aggies rebounded in 2018, recording a 10–2 record on the strength of an offense that averaged 47.5 points per game, second nationally to Oklahoma. Wells' teams, however, have typically been stronger on the defensive side of the ball; in five of his six seasons as a head coach, USU ranked in the top three in the Mountain West in yards per play allowed. He will bring a new mentality to a Texas Tech program that struggled on defense throughout the Kliff Kingsbury era.

Dana Holgorsen

5. Dana Holgorsen, Houston

Previous Job: Head Coach, West Virginia

After reportedly showing interest in the Texas Tech opening, Holgorsen jumped at the next opportunity in the Lone Star State. But even with Holgorsen's Texas ties — he was an assistant at Texas Tech from 2000-07 and Houston from 2008-09 — and Houston's status as arguably the top G5 job, it's still surprising that he left a Big 12 school for a job in the AAC. But he did leave, and it's a coup for Houston. The Cougars, with a fertile recruiting area in their backyard and a huge commitment from the university, are positioned to challenge UCF as the top program in the AAC. It will be up to Holgorsen to fulfill that promise.

6. Geoff Collins, Georgia Tech

Previous Job: Head Coach, Temple

Collins is a Georgia native who has deep ties in the state and the Southeast after stops at Georgia Tech (grad assistant and recruiting coordinator), Alabama, UCF, FIU, Mississippi State and Florida before a two-year stint as the boss at Temple. He is regarded as an outstanding recruiter who is already making his mark in that area in his first offseason at the school. The days of the Yellow Jackets ranking in the 40s and 50s in the national recruiting rankings are likely over. But Collins will have to win games, something his predecessor Paul Johnson did with regularity. There might be a step back in 2019 as the program transitions away from the option offense, but don't be surprised if Collins raises the national profile of this program in the near future.

Satterfield: Jermaine Bibb/Louisville Athletics; Holgorsen: Houston Athletics

7. Will Healy, Charlotte

Previous Job: Head Coach, Austin Peay

The term "rising star" is often overused in the coaching ranks. It is, however, an apt description of the 34-year-old Healy, who transformed Austin Peay from arguably the worst FCS program in the nation — the Governors went 1–34 in the three years prior to his arrival — to a contender in the OVC by his second season. Healy enjoyed immediate success on the recruiting trail, signing a top-5 FCS class before coaching a game and the No. 1 class in 2017 after going 0–11 in his first season. Charlotte is considered to be a program with tremendous potential in Conference USA; the 49ers hired the right coach to take a big step toward reaching that potential in the near future.

Mike Houston

8. Mike Houston, East Carolina

Previous Job: Head Coach, James Madison

Houston was on the verge of taking the job at Charlotte before East Carolina stepped in and convinced him to make the move east to Greenville. A former tight end at Mars Hill (N.C.) University, Houston has won at every stop during his rapid climb up the college football food chain — 29–8 in three seasons at Division II Lenoir-Rhyne, 14–11 in two years at The Citadel and 37–6 (including an FCS national championship) in three years at James Madison. His teams at JMU excelled on both sides of the ball; the 2016 national championship team ranked second in FCS in scoring offense (46.7 ppg), while the '17 team that lost in the national title game led the nation in scoring defense (11.1 ppg). Look for Houston to be a hot commodity among ACC schools if he turns East Carolina into a winner in the next few seasons.

9. Ryan Day, Ohio State

Previous Job: Offensive coordinator, Ohio State

Day is a highly respected offensive coach who was on the fast track to getting a big-time Power 5 job in the near future. Most college football observers, however, didn't expect that job to be as prestigious as Ohio State or for it to happen so soon (he will be 40 when the 2019 season starts). The Buckeyes could have targeted a more established head coach (such as Iowa State's Matt Campbell, an Ohio native, or Purdue's Jeff Brohm) but opted to remain in-house after Urban Meyer announced his retirement. The Ohio State offense thrived with Day as the primary play caller in 2018, leading the Big Ten and ranking second in the nation in total offense. But Ohio State also led the Big Ten in offense in 2017 when Kevin Wilson called the plays and in three of the four seasons prior to Day's arrival. Day could end up being the perfect choice (a la Lincoln Riley at Oklahoma), but the school is taking a bit of a risk on such an unproven commodity.

10. Hugh Freeze, Liberty

Previous Job: Head Coach, Ole Miss (2016)

Freeze has been out of coaching since being dismissed in July 2017 for his off-the-field transgressions. Conventional wisdom suggested he would need to rehabilitate his image as an offensive coordinator at a Power 5 school before getting another job as head coach. Liberty expedited that process by tabbing him to replace Turner Gill as the school enters its second season in the FBS ranks. Freeze went 39–25 in five seasons at Ole Miss and enjoyed a nice two-year run (2014-15) in which he went 19–7 overall and 11–5 in the SEC (with two wins over Alabama). Freeze has his detractors, but he's a very good coach.

11. Gary Andersen, Utah State

Previous Job: Head Coach, Oregon State (2017)

Andersen makes a return to Utah State after a strange few years in which he: a) made the seemingly puzzling decision to leave Wisconsin (where he won 20 games in two seasons) for Oregon State (one of the most difficult Power 5 jobs in the nation); b) resigned halfway through his third season at Oregon State (where he had a 7–23 record) and proceeded to throw his assistant coaches under the bus in a bizarre series of tweets to a journalist that were made public. Utah State, with some significant prodding from influential boosters, was willing to look past those issues and bring Andersen back for a second stint in Logan.

12. Rod Carey, Temple

Previous Job: Head Coach, Northern Illinois

Temple had the unenviable task of hiring two head coaches this offseason. Manny Diaz accepted the job in December but bolted for Miami (Fla.) in early January after Mark Richt retired. The Owls then turned to Carey, a former offensive lineman at Indiana who went 52–30 in six-plus seasons at Northern Illinois. His teams did especially well in league play, recording a 38–10 record in the MAC, but managed only a 14–20 mark against nonconference opponents — including an 0–6 record in bowl games. This is a safe hire by a school that has been forced to hit the coaching carousel five times in the past eight years.

13. Jamey Chadwell, Coastal Carolina

Previous Job: Offensive Coordinator, Coastal Carolina

Chadwell, a former quarterback at East Tennessee State in the 1990s, left his job as the head coach at Charleston Southern (where he went 35–14 in four years) following the 2016 season to become the offensive coordinator for Joe Moglia at Coastal Carolina. It was a seemingly puzzling move at the time, but now, three years later, Chadwell is the boss at CCU following Moglia's retirement. Chadwell also has prior experience as a head coach at two Division II schools, North Greenville and Delta State. The Chanticleers, entering their third season in the FBS ranks, are in good hands.

Jamey Chadwell

Houston: Rob Goldberg Jr./ECU Athletics; Chadwell: Coastal Carolina Athletics

2019 NEW COACHES

Jim McElwain

14. Jim McElwain, Central Michigan

Previous Job: Wide Receivers Coach, Michigan

John Bonamego, a Central Michigan grad, guided the Chippewas to a bowl game in each of his first three seasons but was let go after the program imploded in 2018 (1–11 overall, 0–8 in the MAC). McElwain did a nice job at Colorado State (22–16 in three years) but didn't last three seasons at Florida despite winning the SEC East title in both 2015 and '16. His Gator teams were shockingly bad on offense, ranking no higher than 12th in the SEC in yards per game in his two full seasons. He spent 2018 on Jim Harbaugh's Michigan staff but did not call plays.

15. Manny Diaz, Miami

Previous Job: Head Coach, Temple

Diaz was named head coach by two schools this offseason, accepting the job at Temple on Dec. 12 and Miami on Dec. 31. Regarded as one of the top defensive coordinators in the nation, the well-traveled Diaz — he's coached at NC State, Middle Tennessee, Mississippi State (twice), Texas and Louisiana Tech — would have been a good get for Temple but seems to be a bit of a risk for Miami. The pros: He's a Miami native who is a good recruiter and well-respected defensive coach. The cons: He's never been a head coach on any level, and Miami is not in position to "miss" on yet another hire. This feels like a gamble Miami didn't have to take.

16. Chip Lindsey, Troy

Previous Job: Offensive Coordinator, Auburn

It's been an interesting offseason for Lindsey, who left a job as the offensive coordinator at Auburn to join Les Miles' staff at Kansas only to get the nod as the head coach at Troy after Neal Brown's departure. It will be his second stint at Troy; he was the quarterbacks coach in 2010 between stops as the head coach at two Alabama high schools. Prior to his recent two-year stint at Auburn, he was the offensive coordinator at Southern Miss (2014-15) and Arizona State (2016). He is an Alabama native who is well regarded in the state from his time as a high school coach. This is a solid hire.

17. Eliah Drinkwitz, Appalachian State

Previous Job: Offensive Coordinator, NC State

The Appalachian State administration opted to stay in-state and hired Drinkwitz away from NC State. The 35-year-old Oklahoma native did a nice job in three seasons with the Wolfpack; after ranking ninth in the ACC in total offense in 2016, his first season, the Pack ranked fourth in '17 and third in '18. Drinkwitz, a former high school coach in Northwest Arkansas, broke into the collegiate ranks in 2010 working for Gus Malzahn at Auburn. He is inheriting a program that has won 28 out of its last 32 regular-season games in the Sun Belt.

18. Tyson Helton, Western Kentucky

Previous Job: Offensive Coordinator, Tennessee

In an unlikely turn of events, Helton went from coordinator on the hot seat at Tennessee to head coach at Western Kentucky in a three-day period in late November. The Western Kentucky administration was willing to look past Helton's struggles at Tennessee — the Vols ranked last in the SEC in total offense in 2018 — when it tabbed him to replace Mike Sanford. Helton was on Jeff Brohm's original staff at Western Kentucky and played a key role in the Hilltoppers' rise to the top of Conference USA. His task is to bring the swagger back to Bowling Green after the Toppers struggled through consecutive losing seasons under Sanford's watch.

19. Les Miles, Kansas

Previous Job: Head Coach, LSU (2016)

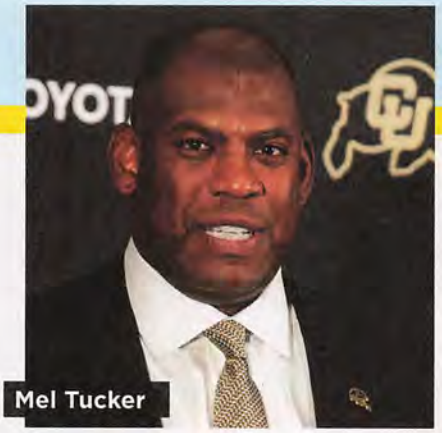
The positive spin of the Miles hire: Kansas, a program that has won 18 games in the past nine years, has a coach with a national title on his résumé. The negative spin: Kansas hired a coach who went 15–11 in the SEC — with some of the most vanilla offenses in the nation — in his final three-plus seasons at a school that has every resource necessary to compete at the highest level in college football. Miles will bring some new energy to the KU program, but a "big name" coach won't necessarily equate to more wins. He will have to raise the school's recruiting profile significantly to compete in the Big 12.

20. Mack Brown, North Carolina

Previous Job: Head Coach, Texas (2013)

North Carolina shocked the college football world by bringing Brown — who hasn't coached since 2013 — back to run the show in Chapel Hill. It was a curious move for a program that could have attracted a promising young coach such as Scott Satterfield (now at Louisville) or Neal Brown (now at West Virginia). But the Tar Heels are clearly trying to relive the glory years of the mid-1990s, when Brown averaged nine wins over his final six seasons. He went on to enjoy great success at Texas, highlighted by the 2005 national championship. There's no guarantee that Brown, who turns 68 in August, can recapture the magic, but his return to coaching has made North Carolina one of the more intriguing storylines of the 2019 season.

McElwain: CMU Athletics; Brown: Jeffrey Camarati; Tucker: Colorado Athletics; Locksley: AP


Mel Tucker

21. Mel Tucker, Colorado

Previous Job: Defensive Coordinator, Georgia

A former defensive back at Wisconsin in the early 1990s, Tucker spent a decade in the NFL before jumping back to the collegiate ranks as an assistant at Alabama in 2015. He then made the move to Georgia with Kirby Smart, where he was the Bulldogs' defensive coordinator the past three seasons. Tucker has an outstanding reputation, both as a coach and recruiter — though a lot of coaches would enjoy success coordinating defenses at schools such as Alabama and Georgia. He inherits a Colorado program that won the Pac-12 South Division just three years ago. The right coach can win in Boulder.

22. Mike Locksley, Maryland

Previous Job: Offensive Coordinator, Alabama

Locksley was hired based on his reputation as an elite recruiter, especially in the D.C.-Maryland-Virginia area, and his recent stint as the offensive coordinator at Alabama. That makes sense — until you take a close look at Locksley's tenure as the head coach at New Mexico. Simply put, it was a disaster both on (2–26 in two-plus seasons) and off (he was suspended for a game for punching an assistant coach) the field. Maryland was searching for someone to unify the fractured fan base. Locksley might check that box, but there's not much on his résumé to suggest he will win with any consistency.

23. Tom Arth, Akron

Previous Job: Head Coach, Chattanooga

The 38-year-old Arth went 40–8 in four years at Division III John Carroll (Ohio) University, his alma mater, and 9–13 in two seasons at FCS Chattanooga. Arth was no doubt attractive to Akron due to his ties in the area; he is a native of Northeast Ohio who went to high school in Cleveland and both played and coached at John Carroll in nearby University Heights. Here's one red flag: Chattanooga ranked last in the Southern Conference in both total offense and scoring offense in 2018.

24. Walt Bell, UMass

Previous Job: Offensive Coordinator, Florida State

The well-traveled Bell landed his first head coaching job at the age of 34 after stops at Memphis (two years), Oklahoma State (one), Southern Miss (two), North Carolina (two), Arkansas State (two), Maryland (two) and, most recently, Florida State (one). He is a Larry Fedora disciple who enjoyed immediate success in his first job as an offensive coordinator at Arkansas State ('14-15) but struggled in two years at Maryland and one year at Florida State (though he did not call plays the entire season with the Seminoles). This was an outside-the-box hire for UMass, which is in a tough spot as a Division I independent.

25. Jake Spavital, Texas State

Previous Job: Offensive Coordinator, West Virginia

Spavital was regarded as a rising star when Kevin Sumlin tabbed him to replace Kliff Kingsbury as Texas A&M's offensive coordinator in 2013 at the age of 28. Three years later he was out of a job, but he quickly landed on his feet as the offensive coordinator at California in 2016 and then re-joined Dana Holgorsen's staff at West Virginia (where he coached in 2011-12) in 2017. Still only 35, Spavital will be the second-youngest head coach in college football after Kent State's Sean Lewis. He seems to be a good fit for a Texas State program that has struggled to find its footing.

26. Thomas Hammock, Northern Illinois

Previous Job: Running Backs Coach, Baltimore Ravens

A two-time 1,000-yard rusher at Northern Illinois in the early 2000s, Hammock coached at Wisconsin (twice), Northern Illinois and Minnesota on the collegiate level before serving as the running backs coach for the Ravens the past six seasons. He inherits a program that has recorded an astounding 61–11 record in the MAC in the past nine seasons under three different coaches. Hammock will be expected to win big.

27. Scot Loeffler, Bowling Green

Previous Job: Offensive Coordinator, Boston College

Loeffler has been one of the most maligned offensive coordinators in college football over the last seven seasons. In 2012 at Auburn, his first season as a play caller at a Power 5 school, Loeffler's offense ranked last in the SEC in total offense. Since, his three teams at Virginia Tech (2013-15) and three at Boston College (2016-18) ranked no higher than 11th in the ACC in yards per play. So what piqued Bowling Green's interest? Possibly the fact that he's an Ohio native who played and coached at Michigan. This hire is a bit of a reach.

Mike Locksley

100 Twitter Accounts Every College Football Fan Should Follow

Tweets	Following	Followers	Likes	Lists	Moments
2,000	100	100	100	100	100

College FB Fan

@CollegeFootballFan

Biggest college football fan guy you'll ever know | Go My Team! | News Junkie

Social media has forever changed the landscape of sports. But no platform has had the impact of Twitter with college football fans. A 24-7 stream of back-and-forth information allows the football faithful to get breaking news, interact with players, teams and fellow fans to discuss rumors, share their outrage or to get deeper insight into every aspect of the game.

So to get the most out of the 2019 season, we compiled our list (in no particular order) of the 100 best accounts to inform, entertain and engage college football fans this season.

Visit AthlonSports.com/TwitterCFB to get quick links to all.

Tweets | Tweets & replies | Media

Athlon Sports @AthlonSports
The Holy Grail of CFB accounts with preseason & pregame insight. (*Editor's note: slight self-promotion.*)

Bill Connelly @SBN_BillC
A data-driven stats nerd who's as likely to share his thoughts as he is an Excel spreadsheet.

Zach Barnett @zach_barnett
Chris Childers @ChildersRadio
CFB Film Room @CFBFilmRoom
CFB Talk @CFTalk
ESPN CFB @ESPNCFB
FBSchedules.com @FBSchedules

Brett McMurphy @Brett_McMurphy
When it comes to "Breaking News," Brett's the man. Plus, we dig his mustache.

Matt Hinton @MattRHinton
Chris Huston @HeismanPundit
Bill King @BillisKing
Todd McShay @McShay13
Faux Pelini @FauxPelini
PFF Draft @PFF_College
Pick Six Previews @PickSixPreviews
Reddit CFB @RedditCFB
Darren Rovell @darrenrovell
Ralph D. Russo @ralphDrussoAP
Doug Samuels @CoachSamz
Aaron Torres @Aaron_Torres
Dan Wetzel @DanWetzel

Richard Deitsch @richarddeitsch
Get a master class on the inner workings and business-related aspects of the game.

Barrett Sallee @BarrettSallee
Great football insight mixed with some solid (dad) humor.

Bleacher Report CFB @BR_CFB
Matt Hayes @MattHayesCFB
Dennis Dodd @dennisdoddcbs
Jerry Palm @jppalmCBS
Andrea Adelson - @aadelsonESPN
Adam Amin @adamamin
Joel D. Anderson @byjoelanderson
Edward Aschoff @AschoffESPN
Anthony Becht @Anthony_Becht

Scott Van Pelt @notthefakeSVP
Insightful, witty, and always has stories that hit you right in the feels.

Football Scoop @FootballScoop
They take a deep dive into the pool of all things coach related.

Todd Blackledge @Todd_Blackledge
Rece Davis @ESPN_ReceDavis
Heather Dinich @CFBHeather
Chris Fallica @chrisfallica
Chris Fowler @cbfowler
David Hale @ADavidHaleJoint
Kirk Herbstreit @KirkHerbstreit
Desmond Howard @DesmondHoward
Sam Khan Jr. @skhanjr
Mel Kiper Jr. @MelKiperESPN
Chris Low @ClowESPN
Tom Luginbill @TomLuginbill
Ivan Maisel @Ivan_Maisel
Trevor Matich @TMatich
Greg McElroy @GregMcElroy
Brian McLaughlin @BrianMacWriter

SEC Mike @MichaelWBratton
Attention SEC fans, follow him to get analysis, news and more on players and recruits.

Ryan McGee @ESPNMcGee
Mark Packer @MarkPacker
David Pollack @davidpollack47
Adam Rittenberg @ESPNRittenberg
Holly Rowe @sportsiren
Alex Scarborough @AlexS_ESPN
Matt Schick @ESPN_Schick
Maria Taylor @MariaTaylor
Jake Trotter @Jake_Trotter
Allison Williams @AllisonW_Sports

Craig Haley @CraigHaley
If you only follow one account covering the FCS, make it this one.

Paul Finebaum @finebaum
Digest his unique takes on the SEC and the world of college football.

Bryan Fischer @BryanDFischer
He always has his finger on the pulse of the sport, backed with no-nonsense news tweets.

Chris B. Brown @smartfootball
We love it when he offers up analysis of team schemes and plays.

Belk Bowl @belkbowl
The best bowl account on Twitter, hands-down. It's loaded with personality — and then some.

Ian Boyd @Ian_A_Boyd
Steven Godfrey @38Godfrey
Spencer Hall @edsbs
Richard Johnson @RJ_Writes

Michael Felder @InTheBleachers
This *WatchStadium* talent tells you what you need to know without sugarcoating it.

Andrew Doughty @ADoughty88
Emory Hunt @FballGameplan
Jason Kirk @JasonKirkSBN
Alex Kirshner @Alex_Kirshner
Joel Klatt @joelklatt
Ryan Nanni @celebrityhottub
Joan Niesen @joanniesen
Andy Staples @Andy_Staples
Bill Bender @BillBender92
Nicole Auerbach @NicoleAuerbach
Jim Weber @JimMWeber
Bruce Feldman @BruceFeldmanCFB

Matt Fortuna @Matt_Fortuna
If you're subscribing to *The Athletic* CFB site, then you have to follow our favorite writer.

Dan Rubenstein @DanRubenstein
Life's too short to not have some fun. Follow immediately and prepare to be entertained.

Chantel Jennings @ChantelJennings
Stewart Mandel @slmandel
Max Olson @Max_Olson
Dan Uthman @DanUthman
Chris Vannini @ChrisVannini
Paul Myerberg @PaulMyerberg
George Schroeder @GeorgeSchroeder

Dan Wolken @DanWolken
A *USA Today* writer who's always at ground zero with news and college football rumblings.

Nick Bromberg @NickBromberg
Sam Cooper @SamDCooper
Pat Forde @YahooForde
Charles Robinson @CharlesRobinson
Pete Thamel @PeteThamel

Adam Kramer @KegsnEggs
Like a box of chocolates, you never quite know what you're going to get. But you'll like it.

Tailgating Gear Guide

Whether your team wins or loses, you can still enjoy tailgating this college football season. Here are the must-have items to make the most of your pregame party.

Elite Chair

Bring this foldable chair (it comes with a carrying bag) and take comfort in knowing it has two cup holders just waiting to secure your pregame libations. *$30 shop.rolltide.com*

JBL Xtreme 2 Speaker

It's waterproof and offers 15 hours of playtime with each charge. Use the Bluetooth or plug-in to listen to music or the play-by-play from Saturday's games. Oh, and the sound will blow you away. *$220 jbl.com*

ORCA 27 oz. Chaser

A stainless steel, double-walled, vacuum-sealed body means your drink stays ice cold or piping hot for as long as you need it to. *$40 orcacoolers.com*

Goal Zero YETI 400 Lithium Portable Power Station

A quiet power source that can run a 32-inch LCD television for three hours, or long enough to enjoy a game. *$600 goalzero.com*

Traeger Ranger Pellet Grill

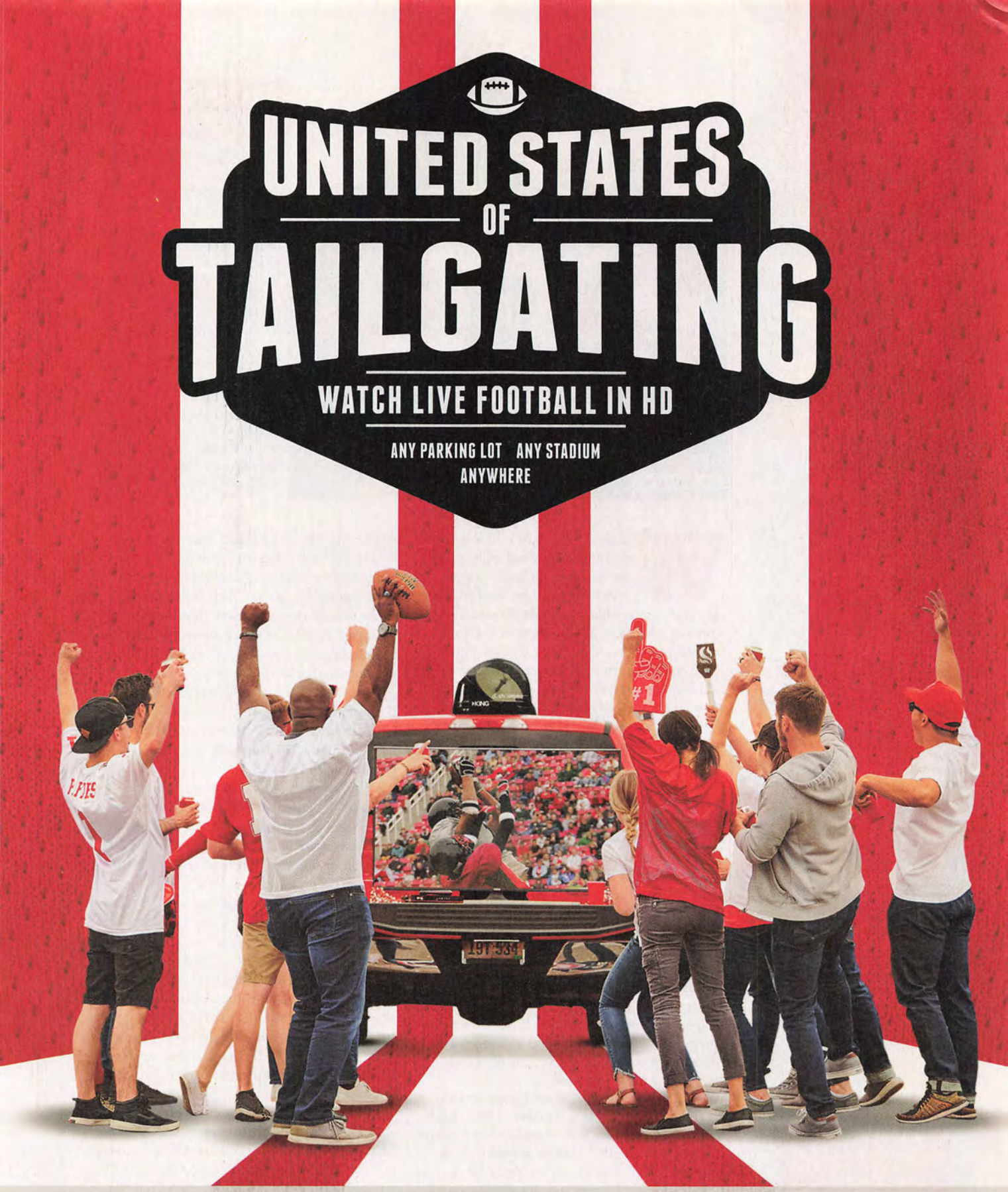
This portable grill has temperature control, space for six burgers (or 10 hot dogs), and includes a Keep Warm Mode so food is "hot off the grill" no matter when it's served. *$400 traegergrills.com*

Sportula

A stainless steel spatula sporting your favorite team and bottle opener? Yes, please. *$20 youthefan.com*

ORCA 40 Quart Cooler

It checks all the boxes: Items stay cold up to 10 days, an easy-flow drainage spout makes for quick cleanup, it's durable, and it can hold 48 cans. *$360 orcacoolers.com*



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Teams on the RISE

By Bill Connelly

Joe Burrow

2018 S&P+ RANKINGS

1. Alabama (14-1)
2. Georgia (11-3)
3. Clemson (15-0)
4. Oklahoma (12-2)
5. LSU (10-3)
6. Ohio State (13-1)
7. Auburn (8-5)
8. Mississippi State (8-5)
9. Florida (10-3)
10. Michigan (10-3)
11. Texas A&M (9-4)
12. Missouri (8-5)
13. Notre Dame (12-1)
14. Washington (10-4)
15. Penn State (9-4)
16. Fresno State (12-2)
17. Utah (9-5)
18. UCF (12-1)
19. Wisconsin (8-5)
20. South Carolina (7-6)

We say it every year in this space, but college football will forever be the ultimate small-sample sport. One college football game carries the same impact as multiple weeks' worth of a MLB or NBA season. A college football team's record at the end of the year is the equivalent to an NBA team's record in mid-November; it doesn't tell you the whole story about a team's quality.

In other words, it's hard to evaluate teams in this sport. Advanced stats can help.

I have been maintaining the S&P+ ratings at FootballOutsiders.com since 2008. They represent an attempt to dig down to a level few computer ratings go, deriving efficiency and explosiveness from the play-by-play level. They combine aspects of football that affect college football's Five Factors — efficiency, explosiveness, field position, finishing drives and turnovers — into a single, opponent-adjusted number. I redesign the algorithm frequently and did so this past offseason.

S&P+ attempts to derive value from every play and drive of a given game (filtering out garbage time), and it watches every game, so to speak. We probably do not. It and other computer ratings can drop pretty strong hints regarding who's about to have a really good season, or a really poor one.

In 2016, for instance, Notre Dame took on an ambitious schedule and ranked 18th overall but lost seven games by a touchdown or less and finished 4–8. In 2017, they improved to 12th, flipped a lot of close games and went 10–3.

Last year, in this space, we discussed some potential statistical outliers for the 2018 season and listed six teams that might end up doing quite a bit better than their 2017 results would suggest: Ohio State, Michigan State, Mississippi State, Oregon, Florida State and Baylor. Granted, FSU's offensive line imploded due to injuries and attrition, and Michigan State never figured things out offensively. But three of six teams saw their win totals improve (Baylor improved by six wins), and a fourth (Mississippi State) improved from 19th to eighth in S&P+ despite slipping from 9–4 to 8–5.

Meanwhile, we listed three teams that, per the computers, were likely to regress in 2018: USC, Louisville and Washington State. Wazzu held steady, but the three still went from a combined 28–12 to 18–19.

What are the computers — and the S&P+ rankings in particular — saying about 2019? Let's begin by once again looking at teams that may have either looked out of place in the 2018 rankings or might be due to surprise in 2019.

The 2018 rankings were SEC-friendly to a degree we haven't seen since about 2014. It might seem strange to see a five-loss team like Auburn or MSU so high, but it starts to fit when you see that Auburn played six teams in the top 15, and MSU played five. (They went a combined 4–7 against those teams and 12–3 against everyone else.) Similarly, it might be strange to see Georgia so high, but the Bulldogs were a dominant 11–0 against teams outside of the S&P+ top five and needed some bad luck to lose to the No. 1 team.

Will 2019 be as SEC-oriented? It's conceivable. Kentucky is likely to regress, and Auburn, Mississippi State and Missouri will be breaking in new (and potentially exciting) starting quarterbacks. But a couple of teams from the conference are also among the most likely to take big steps forward.

Here are some of the most likely teams to rise in 2019.

Burrow: David Rosenblum/AP; Taylor: Tom Lynn/Wisconsin Athletics; Huntley: Peter Brouillet

LSU

Granted, it's hard to improve on 10 wins when you live in the SEC West. But the Tigers were better than even their year-end No. 6 AP poll ranking would suggest, and now they return their starting quarterback and almost all of their receiving corps and offensive line. Last year's sophomore-heavy defense is now junior-heavy.

The LSU ground game was confusingly ineffective in 2018, but heading into the fall, the passing game might have more potential than it has since Zach Mettenberger was behind center. Quarterback Joe Burrow's full-season stats were distinctly average — neither his 57.8 percent completion rate nor his 133.2 passer rating stood out in any way — but his improvement down the stretch was noticeable.

Over the first nine games of the season, Burrow completed just 53 percent of his passes at 12.5 yards per completion. His TD-to-INT ratio was 6-to-4, and his passer rating was just 114.3.

His last four games, however? A 67 percent completion rate, 14.4 yards per completion, 10-to-1 TDs-to-INTs, and a 173.5 rating.

Yes, those last four games included romps over Arkansas and Rice. They also included games against top-50 (per S&P+) Texas A&M and UCF defenses. Even accounting for schedule strength, that's drastic improvement. And now he brings back his top seven wideouts as well.

By the way, that sophomore-heavy defense ranked fifth in Def. S&P+ last year. It could be even better, too.

Jonathan Taylor

Wisconsin

By any definition, 2018 was a disappointing season in Madison. This very publication ranked Paul Chryst's Badgers ninth, in need of just a couple of new defensive pieces to make a serious College Football Playoff run. Those pieces did not come together, however, as Wisconsin fell from fourth to 29th in Def. S&P+ and from third to 34th in scoring defense.

That, plus late-season quarterback injury issues, helped to drop Wisconsin's win total considerably. The Badgers dropped a fluky 24–21 loss to BYU in nonconference play and got outscored by an average of 32–14 in four conference losses — not sure whether the 32 or the 14 is more surprising.

Wisconsin also beat solid Iowa and Purdue teams and walloped Miami in the Pinstripe Bowl. This was a far less consistent team than anyone predicted, but the Badgers still finished the season 19th in S&P+.

Granted, there are still some QB issues to resolve. But defensive continuity is much higher this time around, and the schedule features visits from Michigan, Michigan State and Big Ten West division hopefuls Northwestern, Iowa and Purdue. This team has more to prove than normal, but the combination of running back Jonathan Taylor and some progression back to the mean could mean the division title still goes through Madison.

Utah

Don't let Utah's two late losses distract you: The Utes were better than you think last year, and they return just about everybody in 2019.

Despite a midseason quarterback injury, Kyle Whittingham's 2018 team managed to improve from 53rd to 45th in Off. S&P+. Tyler Huntley was on fire — 73 percent completion rate in his final four full games — when he was lost for the season with a collarbone injury. Leading rusher Zack Moss injured his knee and missed the final five games as well. But with freshman Jason Shelley behind center, Utah averaged 32 points over the final three games of the regular season and won the Pac-12 South division anyway.

Defensively, the Utes fielded a top-20 unit for the first time in three years, too. And now everyone on a dominant defensive line — ends Bradlee Anae, Maxs Tupai and Mika Tafua; tackles John Penisini, Leki Fotu and

Tyler Huntley

Hauati Pututau — returns. The linebacking corps and secondary have lost a few important pieces, but the Utes could have the best front in the conference. Oh yeah, and Huntley, Shelley, Moss and every receiver are back, too. The best version of last year's team could be this year's baseline.

Tyler Johnson

Minnesota

Nebraska might not be the only up-and-comer with division title goals. Like the Huskers, Minnesota won four of six at the end of the year and among those four were blowout wins over Purdue, Wisconsin and Georgia Tech. Nebraska was a healthy 49th in S&P+ in 2018; the Gophers were an even healthier 45th.

The biggest problem for P.J. Fleck's second Minnesota team was drastic inconsistency. The Gophers played in only two games all year that were decided by a touchdown or less. They spent most of the season either drastically exceeding projections (see the three blowout wins above, plus a 21–14 win over a very good Fresno State team) or drastically underachieving (see losses to Nebraska, Maryland and Illinois, all by at least 24 points).

However, it's hard to be consistent when two freshmen are throwing passes, two freshmen are taking most of the carries, three freshmen are among your top four receivers and five freshmen and sophomores are accounting for 42 of your 65 offensive line starts. Minnesota survived all that youth, surged from 64th to 45th in S&P+ late in the year and now returns the lion's share of last year's two deep. This team will be dangerous.

Tennessee

In Jeremy Pruitt's first year in charge in Knoxville, the Vols went from 4–8 and 67th in S&P+ to 5–7 and 48th, with the offense improving considerably (from 83rd to 38th). Before suffering an injury against Missouri and laying an egg against Vanderbilt, quarterback Jarrett Guarantano had shown clear development: He went into those last two games with a 65 percent completion rate and 149.2 passer rating.

Defensively, there were obvious issues. The Vols were dreadfully inefficient, ranking 115th with a 47 percent success rate. But that was with true freshmen and sophomores playing key roles in a beaten-up secondary. The defensive line is getting retooled in 2019, but that's basically the only unit that doesn't return a majority of its production.

Tennessee has some of the best overall continuity in the country this fall — Guarantano, running backs Ty Chandler and Tim Jordan, and almost literally every receiver and linemen return on offense, and the linebacking corps and secondary return most contributors, too. If a couple of new pieces on the line stick, the infinitely more experienced Vols could be a much bigger handful than most realize.

Jarrett Guarantano

Johnson: Hannah Foslien/Getty; Guarantano, Akers: Harrison McClary

Cam Akers

Florida State

Second time's a charm, right? Just keep picking the Seminoles until they inevitably jump back up at some point?

Actually, ignoring last year's pick, there are plenty of reasons to assume FSU will improve. This is a team that recruits at a top-15 level and returns an experienced quarterback (2017 starter James Blackman), most of its skill corps weapons and eight defensive starters. Of course the Noles should improve upon last year's 5–7 record. It almost feels like shooting fish in a barrel to predict it.

So maybe it's not a question of whether they improve, but instead how much they improve.

In two years, the Seminoles fell from fifth to 37th to 97th in Off. S&P+; the decline began in Jimbo Fisher's final season and picked up speed with Willie Taggart. The offensive line almost literally can't get worse, but if or when it becomes less of a liability, will Blackman and a receiving corps led by a sophomore (Tamorrion Terry) and junior (D.J. Matthews) be ready to take advantage? Can running back Cam Akers actually find the open field more frequently?

At the same time, will this offensive improvement just be offset by defensive regression? The overall experience level is high on defense, but the Noles do have to replace by far their best playmaker (defensive end Brian Burns). It's a long road back to where FSU was from 2010-16. How much ground can Taggart make up in one offseason?

Herman: Chris Covatta; Bowden: Joe Robbins; Book: Walter G. Arce Sr.

Teams on the DECLINE

Texas

Tom Herman

Is Texas head coach Tom Herman a wizard, or are we overreacting to a small sample size? Twice in four seasons, a Herman-led team has defied the numbers to rack up a huge win total; in 2015 at Houston, his Cougars went 13–1 despite a No. 53 S&P+ ranking, and last year his Longhorns won 10 games despite getting outgained on a per-play basis (5.5 yards per play for UT, 5.6 for opponents).

Herman's 2016 and 2017 teams, by the way, achieved as the numbers would have expected.

Herman teams have the tendency to over-produce against the best teams on the schedule and dramatically under-produce as a favorite (see: losses to UConn and SMU at Houston or, of course, an 0–2 record against Maryland at Texas). How will that work against a schedule that sees the Horns favored in nine or 10 games?

Kentucky

Lynn Bowden

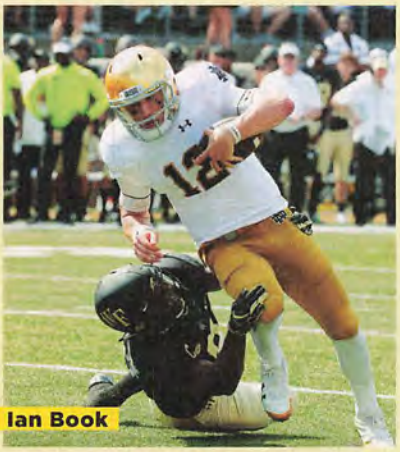
Kentucky finished with 10 wins and a No. 12 final AP ranking, its best year since 1977. But the SEC-friendly S&P+ rankings had the Wildcats at only 25th, and now they're going about life without all-world outside linebacker Josh Allen, most of an excellent secondary and running back Benny Snell Jr. That's a pretty clear recipe for regression.

Getting Florida, Arkansas, Missouri and Tennessee at home should allow the Wildcats to make a fourth straight bowl game. But after averaging six wins per year from 2014-17, they're more likely to end up near that mark than double-digit wins this fall.

Notre Dame

Consider this more of a regression-to-the-mean situation than actual decline. Brian Kelly's Fighting Irish were probably more "top-15 good" than "Playoff good" last season, and they could very well hit that level again in 2019. But trips to Georgia, Michigan and Stanford will make a repeat run to 12–0 awfully difficult.

The Irish could be as good as they were last season but go about 9–3 instead.


Ian Book

FCS PREVIEW

By Craig Haley

TY BROOKS, NDSU

1. NORTH DAKOTA STATE

(15-0, 8-0 Missouri Valley)

Having to replace 15 starters is difficult, but let's face it, the Bison remain the team to beat following two straight and a record seven FCS titles in the last eight seasons. First-year coach Matt Entz, who was elevated from defensive coordinator after Chris Klieman left for Kansas State, already has the winning blueprint. Junior linebacker Jabril Cox oozes talent as an NFL prospect and 6'5" defensive end Derrek Tuszka creates matchup problems. The offense must replace quarterback Easton Stick, who went 49-3 as a starter, presumably with redshirt freshman Trey Lance or Iowa State transfer Zeb Noland. While four-year mainstays Bruce Anderson and Lance Dunn are gone at running back, Ty Brooks and Adam Cofield have combined for 2,180 rushing yards and 20 touchdowns in highly productive supporting roles. The Bison will face a tougher regular-season schedule, including a five-game stretch of North Dakota, at Delaware, UC Davis, at Illinois State and Northern Iowa, plus a trip to South Dakota State. Despite that tough slate — and the loss of the QB and head coach — North Dakota State remains the team to beat.

2. JAMES MADISON

(9-4, 6-2 CAA)

First-year coach Curt Cignetti beat the Dukes while at Elon last season and then joined them, replacing Mike Houston, who departed for East Carolina. Cignetti inherits 19 returning starters and all the key specialists. They're motivated following a second-round ouster in the playoffs. Former Pitt quarterback Ben DiNucci was good, not great, in his first season, but he'll be protected by an offensive line that returns intact. Plus, the trio of wide receivers Riley Stapleton, Kyndel Dean and Jake Brown is strong. Cornerback Rashad Robinson, the 2018 CAA Preseason Defensive Player of the Year, missed last season with a foot injury and rejoins linebacker Dmitri Holloway on an athletic defense.

3. SOUTH DAKOTA STATE

(10-3, 6-2 Missouri Valley)

The Jackrabbits know what the next step is after reaching the quarterfinals in 2016 and the semis in the last two seasons. How they replace the best quarterback in school history (Taryn Christion) is their biggest question. Either redshirt freshman J'Bore Gibbs, junior Kanin Nelson or transfer Kurt Walding will be the answer. The running back duo of 2018 Missouri Valley Freshman of the Year Pierre Strong Jr. and Mikey Daniel should take some pressure off the new signal caller. There are few FCS players better at their positions than linebacker Christian Rozeboom (SDSU's three-time tackle leader), wide receiver Cade Johnson and placekicker Chase Vinatieri (Adam's nephew).

MUST-SEE MATCHUPS

Eastern Washington at Jacksonville State (Sept. 14)
Maine at Colgate (Sept. 21)
UC Davis at North Dakota State (Sept. 21)
Southeast Missouri at Jacksonville State (Oct. 19)
Nicholls at Sam Houston State (Oct. 19)
Towson at James Madison (Oct. 26)
North Dakota State at South Dakota State (Oct. 26)
Weber State at UC Davis (Oct. 26)
Furman at Wofford (Nov. 16)
Montana at Montana State (Nov. 23)

ZACH HALL
SE MISSOURI

4. EASTERN WASHINGTON

(12-3, 7-1 Big Sky)

Despite losing a number of key players to graduation, the 2018 national runners-up, who lost 38-24 to North Dakota State in Frisco, Texas, remain in the title hunt. Dual-threat quarterback Eric Barriere, who set a playoff record with seven touchdown passes in the semifinals, and running backs Antoine Custer Jr. and Tamarick Pierce will work behind an outstanding O-line. Linebacker Chris Ojoh and safety Dehonta Hayes finished second and third on the team in tackles, respectively. Incredibly, the Big Sky's other three 2018 playoff teams — Weber State, UC Davis and Montana State — are not on the Eagles' schedule.

JAKE MAIER, UC DAVIS

5. UC DAVIS

(10-3, 7-1 Big Sky)

The Aggies so enjoyed their first appearance in the FCS playoffs last season that they're eyeing a run even further than the quarterfinals. Senior quarterback Jake Maier, the 2018 Big Sky Offensive Player of the Year who passed for 3,931 yards and 34 touchdowns, is surrounded by a wealth of offensive talent, including running backs Ulonzo Gilliam and Tehran Thomas, wide receiver Jared Harrell, tight end Wesley Preece and four returning starters on the offensive line. Eddie Robinson Award-winning coach Dan Hawkins must restock a defense that features sophomore linebacker Montell Bland.

FCS ALL-AMERICA TEAM

OFFENSE			
QB	Jake Maier	6-0/200/Sr	UC Davis
RB	A.J. Hines	5-11/225/Sr.	Duquesne
RB	James Robinson	5-10/220/Sr.	Illinois State
WR	Michael Bandy	5-11/190/Sr.	San Diego
WR	Josh Pearson	6-4/205/Sr.	Jacksonville State
TE	Charlie Taumoepeau	6-3/240/Sr.	Portland State
C	Zach Larsen	6-1/305/Sr.	Southern Utah
OL	Spencer Blackburn	6-2/285/Sr.	Eastern Washington
OL	J'Von Brown	6-3/350/Sr.	Central Connecticut State
OL	Noah Johnson	6-4/300 Sr.	Idaho
OL	Zack Johnson	6-6/317/Sr.	North Dakota State
DEFENSE			
DL	Sully Laiche	6-2/270/Sr.	Nicholls
DL	Nasir Player	6-5/271/Sr.	ETSU
DL	Chris Terrell	6-3/270/Sr.	Central Arkansas
DL	Nick Wheeler	6-2/255/Sr.	Colgate
LB	Jabril Cox	6-3/233/Jr.	North Dakota State
LB	Zach Hall	6-0/230/Sr.	Southeast Missouri
LB	Dante Olson	6-3/237/Sr.	Montana
DB	Marlon Bridges	6-0/200/Sr.	Jacksonville State
DB	Manny Patterson	5-10/180/Sr.	Maine
DB	Rashad Robinson	5-11/185/Sr.	James Madison
DB	Isiah Swann	6-0/190/Sr.	Dartmouth
SPECIALISTS			
K	Aidan O'Neill	6-1/199/Sr.	Towson
P	Cade Coffey	6-1/191/Jr.	Idaho
KR	Jean Constant	5-9/177/Sr.	Bryant
PR	D'Angelo Amos	6-1/186/Jr.	James Madison

ANTOINE CUSTER JR. EASTERN WASHINGTON

PROJECTED PLAYOFF QUALIFIERS

Colgate (Patriot champ)
Duquesne (Northeast champ)
Eastern Washington (Big Sky champ)
Elon (at-large qualifier)
Furman (at-large qualifier)
Illinois State (at-large qualifier)
Indiana State (at-large qualifier)
Jacksonville State (Ohio Valley champ)
James Madison (CAA champ)
Kennesaw State (Big South champ)
Maine (at-large qualifier)
McNeese (at-large qualifier)
Montana State (at-large qualifier)
Nicholls (Southland champ)
North Dakota State (Missouri Valley champ)
Northern Iowa (at-large qualifier)
Sam Houston State (at-large qualifier)
San Diego (Pioneer champ)
South Dakota State (at-large qualifier)
Southeast Missouri (at-large qualifier)
Towson (at-large qualifier)
UC Davis (at-large qualifier)
Weber State (at-large qualifier)
Wofford (Southern champ)

Brooks: Tim Sanger/NDSU Athletics; Hall: SE Missouri Athletics; Maier: UC Davis Athletics; Custer: Eastern Washington Athletics

CHASE FOURCADE, NICHOLLS

6. MAINE

(10-4, 7-1 CAA)

With seven road games following last year's nine, the Black Bears' nickname might be changed to Road Warriors in former offensive coordinator Nick Charlton's first season as head coach. Fortunately, the first national semifinalist in program history returns significant talent, including quarterback Chris Ferguson and three All-CAA first-teamers — kick returner Earnest Edwards, defensive end Kayon Whitaker and cornerback Manny Patterson.

7. JACKSONVILLE STATE

(9-4, 7-1 Ohio Valley)

Having lost only one Ohio Valley Conference game in coach John Grass' five seasons, the Gamecocks are primed for another banner campaign, although their success in the playoffs is always the issue. Former Clemson quarterback Zerrick Cooper settled in nicely, teaming with wide receivers Josh Pearson (17 touchdowns) and Jamari Hester (11). The defense is led by fourth-year starter Marlon Bridges at safety.

8. MONTANA STATE

(8-5, 5-3 Big Sky)

There's such depth at quarterback that Troy Andersen, a co-selection on the 2018 All-Big Sky first team, is moving back to linebacker as a junior. Run-first signal caller Chris Murray should take over again after sitting out last year's playoff season due to academics. Freshman running back Isaiah Ifanse stepped in to post a 1,000-yard campaign.

9. WEBER STATE

(10-3, 7-1 Big Sky)

Any talk of a step backward in the deep Big Sky will motivate a Wildcats program that has back-to-back seasons of double-digit wins. Running back Josh Davis (1,362 yards), the National Freshman of the Year, and wide receiver/kick returner Rashid Shaheed are superb. Defensive ends Adam Rodriguez and Jonah Williams will play tag-team in the opposing team's backfield.

10. WOFFORD

(9-4, 6-2 Southern)

Second-year coach Josh Conklin has implemented more passing, but the triple option will keep the Terriers grounded, with quarterbacks Joe Newman and Miller Mosley operating behind a stout offensive line. All-conference nose tackle Mikel Horton and defensive end Thad Mangum front the 3-4 defense. The schedule includes a Nov. 2 visit to FBS national champion Clemson.

11. TOWSON

(7-5, 5-3 CAA)

CAA Offensive Player of the Year Tom Flacco (Joe's younger brother) took the conference by storm, supported by running back Shane Simpson, who was second nationally in all-purpose yards per game, and wideouts Shane Leatherbury and Jabari Allen. If kicker Aidan O'Neill matches last year's 22 field goals, he'll tie the FCS record of 75.

12. ILLINOIS STATE

(6-5, 3-5 Missouri Valley)

The Redbirds disappointed last season despite an FBS win over Colorado State. Quarterback Brady Davis and running back James Robinson (1,290 yards, 12 TDs) return from a team that boasted talented underclassmen. Offensive linemen rarely come bigger than 6'10" left tackle Drew Himmelman.

13. NICHOLLS

(9-4, 7-2 Southland)

The Colonels shared the Southland title last season and want it all to themselves this year. Nine returnees earned a form of all-conference honors, led by Player of the Year Chase Fourcade, their fourth-year quarterback. Defensive end Sully Laiche and linebacker Evan Veron combined for 39 tackles for a loss and 15.5 sacks as juniors.

14. KENNESAW STATE

(11-2, 5-0 Big South)

A scaled-back schedule will help the Owls overcome the graduation of their original recruiting class. Only two starters return on offense, with senior Daniel David hoping to take the controls of the triple option. The defense is much more experienced with linebacker Bryson Armstrong, defensive end Desmond Johnson and cornerback Dorian Walker.

BRYSON ARMSTRONG
KENNESAW STATE

15. INDIANA STATE

(7-4, 5-3 Missouri Valley)

Despite making the biggest improvement in the FCS (from 0-11 in 2017), the Sycamores were left on the playoff sideline. They'll look to get there this time behind QB Ryan Boyle, the MVC Newcomer of the Year, and a full set of receivers, plus linebacker Jonas Griffith, who seeks a third straight 100-tackle season.

16. FURMAN

(6-4, 6-2 Southern)

A share of the SoCon title wasn't enough to land a playoff spot, but Furman was building behind a lot of young talent, including linebacker Adrian Hope (FCS-high 15 sacks). A Bo Layton-anchored offensive line and running back Devin Wynn will take pressure off a new quarterback.

17. NORTHERN IOWA

(7-6, 5-3 Missouri Valley)

The perennial Missouri Valley power figures to have some growing pains this season, and the Panthers rarely take it easy schedule-wise. Redshirt freshman Will McElvain will be in the mix at quarterback, where the new starter will be helped by senior tight end Briley Moore and an outstanding receiving corps as well as running back Trevor Allen. A healthier Chris Kolarevic at linebacker is imperative.

NICK WHEELER, COLGATE

18. COLGATE

(10-2, 6-0 Patriot)

Senior defensive lineman Nick Wheeler and cornerback Abu Daramy-Swaray return from last year's record-setting defense, which tied the FCS single-season mark by posting five shutouts. Quarterback Grant Breneman and kicker Chris Puzzi were standouts in the playoff win over James Madison. A tough nonconference road schedule kicks off at Air Force.

19. SOUTHEAST MISSOURI

(9-4, 6-2 Ohio Valley)

The Redhawks stopped Jacksonville State's 36-game OVC winning streak and notched their first playoff win during a breakout season. Leading the way is inside linebacker Zach Hall, the Buck Buchanan Award winner and one of 10 returning starters on defense. A rebuilt offensive line must solidify for the Daniel Santacaterina-to-Kristian Wilkerson passing combo to succeed.

20. SAM HOUSTON STATE

(6-5, 5-4 Southland)

Preseason expectations are lower, but coach K.C. Keeler expects a bounce-back with 18 returning starters. The offense seeks a fast tempo behind QB Ty Brock and wide receiver Nathan Stewart, who's had three 1,000-yard seasons, while Texas transfer Toneil Carter will complement speedy running back Kyran Jackson. Fifth-year senior linebacker Hunter Brown led the team in tackles.

21. ELON

(6-5, 4-3 CAA)

With former head coach Curt Cignetti off to James Madison, defensive coordinator Tony Trisciani has taken over. Two straight playoff seasons ended with three-game losing streaks, but an injury to junior quarterback Davis Cheek was a big reason for the slide in 2018. Running back Jaylan Thomas followed Cheek as the CAA Offensive Rookie of the Year. Senior Greg Liggs Jr. is a shutdown cornerback.

22. MCNEESE

(6-5, 5-4 Southland)

Charlie Strong disciple Sterlin Gilbert takes over as a first-time head coach, seeking to get the Cowboys back to the playoffs for the first time since 2015. He'll turn the offense over to junior QB Cody Orgeron, son of LSU coach Ed Orgeron. Defensive end Chris Livings and cornerback Colby Burton are the senior defensive leaders.

23. MONTANA

(6-5, 4-4 Big Sky)

Mediocrity doesn't look good on the Grizzlies, who've missed the playoffs in three straight seasons. It's no coincidence that they have a three-game losing streak to rival Montana State. Bobby Hauck, in the second season of his second stint at UM, looks for big senior campaigns out of dual-threat quarterback Dalton Sneed and linebacker Dante Olson, whose 13.7 tackles per game led the FCS.

24. DELAWARE

(7-5, 5-3 CAA)

Having ended the Blue Hens' seven-year playoff drought last season, third-year coach Danny Rocco now must prove that his recruiting classes can replace the loss of more than two dozen seniors. Running back Dejoun Lee and linebacker/defensive end Colby Reeder will become leaders as juniors, and senior quarterback Pat Kehoe played well when healthy last year. North Dakota State pays a visit on Sept. 14.

25. NORTH CAROLINA A&T

(10-2, 6-1 MEAC)

The two-time reigning MEAC and Celebration Bowl champs return only eight starters. Fifth-year quarterback Kylil Carter will team well with wide receivers Elijah Bell and Zachary Leslie, but the Aggies need a full season out of big-play cornerback Mac McCain. Duke is on alert considering the Aggies have defeated an FBS opponent in each of the last three seasons.

KYLIL CARTER, N.C. A&T

Fourcade: Nicholls Athletics; Armstrong: Kennesaw State Athletics; Wheeler: Colgate Athletics; Carter: Kevin L. Dorsey/N.C. A&T Athletics

ACC *Preview*

Atlantic	*Predicted Order of Finish*	Coastal
1 *Clemson* **TIGERS** 13-0, 8-0 ACC		1 *Virginia* **CAVALIERS** 9-4, 6-2 ACC
2 *Syracuse* **ORANGE** 9-3, 5-3 ACC		2 *Virginia Tech* **HOKIES** 8-4, 5-3 ACC
3 *Florida State* **SEMINOLES** 7-5, 4-4 ACC		3 *Miami* **HURRICANES** 8-4, 5-3 ACC
4 *NC State* **WOLFPACK** 7-5, 4-4 ACC		4 *Pittsburgh* **PANTHERS** 6-6, 4-4 ACC
5 *Wake Forest* **DEMON DEACONS** 7-5, 3-5 ACC		5 *Duke* **BLUE DEVILS** 5-7, 3-5 ACC
6 *Boston College* **EAGLES** 6-6, 3-5 ACC		6 *North Carolina* **TAR HEELS** 4-8, 2-6 ACC
7 *Louisville* **CARDINALS** 4-8, 2-6 ACC		7 *Georgia Tech* **YELLOW JACKETS** 4-8, 2-6

ACC Championship: **Clemson over Virginia**

Games to Watch

AUG. 29
GEORGIA TECH AT CLEMSON
The ACC Network launches with the defending national champs playing host to Georgia Tech as Geoff Collins makes his debut with the Jackets.

AUG. 31
VIRGINIA AT PITTSBURGH
The Cavs could emerge as the team to beat in the Coastal Division. Winning in Week 1 at Pitt would be a nice start for Bronco Mendenhall's club.

SEPT. 7
TEXAS A&M AT CLEMSON
This figures to be the toughest test of the season for a Clemson team that has not lost a regular-season nonconference game since 2014.

SEPT. 7
MIAMI AT NORTH CAROLINA
Mack Brown will make his home debut against another one of the ACC's new coaches — Brown's old defensive coordinator at Texas, Manny Diaz.

SEPT. 14
CLEMSON AT SYRACUSE
No ACC team has played Clemson tougher than Dino Babers' Orange the last two seasons. This is far from a sure thing for the Tigers.

SEPT. 14
PITTSBURGH AT PENN STATE
Pittsburgh has dropped back-to-back games — by a combined 84–20 score — to its rivals from Happy Valley. This is not sitting well with Panther fans.

Higgins, Ross: Getty Images

2019 Unit Rankings

	QB	RB	WR/TE	OL	DL	LB	DB
BOSTON COLLEGE	7	2	12	11	13	6	14
CLEMSON	1	1	1	1	1	2	2
DUKE	12	10	13	7	10	14	6
FLORIDA STATE	5	3	4	14	4	5	5
GEORGIA TECH	14	5	14	13	14	13	13
LOUISVILLE	13	13	6	12	11	7	12
MIAMI	9	4	5	10	2	1	4
NORTH CAROLINA	11	8	11	9	8	10	11
NC STATE	10	9	7	4	5	8	8
PITTSBURGH	8	12	10	8	6	9	9
SYRACUSE	3	7	2	3	3	12	3
VIRGINIA	2	14	8	6	9	3	1
VIRGINIA TECH	4	11	3	2	7	4	7
WAKE FOREST	6	6	9	5	12	11	10

Recruiting by School

1. Clemson
2. Florida State
3. Virginia Tech
4. Miami
5. NC State
6. North Carolina
7. Virginia
8. Duke
9. Georgia Tech
10. Syracuse
11. Wake Forest
12. Pittsburgh
13. Boston College
14. Louisville

Tee Higgins & Justyn Ross, Clemson

2019 Bowl Projections

Fiesta Bowl (CFP): Clemson vs. Georgia

Orange Bowl: Syracuse vs. Florida

Camping World Bowl: Virginia vs. Iowa State

Belk Bowl: Virginia Tech vs. Tennessee

Music City Bowl: Miami (Fla.) vs. Kentucky

Sun Bowl: Florida State vs. UCLA

Pinstripe Bowl: NC State vs. Michigan State

Military Bowl: Pittsburgh vs. Temple

Quick Lane Bowl: Wake Forest vs. Northwestern

Independence Bowl: Boston College vs. Louisiana Tech

ACC Coordinator Carousel

Boston College: Offense
New: Mike Bajakian
Old: Scot Loeffler

Boston College: Defense
New: Bill Sheridan
Old: Anthony Campanile, Jim Reid

Florida State: Offense
New: Kendal Briles
Old: Walt Bell

Louisville: Offense
New: Dwayne Ledford
Old: Lonnie Galloway
Mike Summers

Louisville: Defense
New: Bryan Brown, Cort Dennison
Old: Bryan VanGorder

Georgia Tech: Offense
New: Dave Patenaude
Old: Paul Johnson

Georgia Tech: Defense
New: Nathan Burton, Andrew Thacker
Old: Nate Woody

Miami: Offense
New: Dan Enos
Old: Thomas Brown

Miami: Defense
New: Blake Baker, Ephraim Banda
Old: Manny Diaz

NC State: Offense
New: Des Kitchings, George McDonald
Old: Eli Drinkwitz

NC State: Defense
New: Tony Gibson, Dave Huxtable
Old: Dave Huxtable, Ted Roof

North Carolina: Offense
New: Phil Longo
Old: Chris Kapilovic

North Carolina: Defense
New: Jay Bateman, Tommy Thigpen
Old: John Papuchis

Pittsburgh: Offense
New: Mark Whipple
Old: Shawn Watson

Wake Forest: Defense
New: Lyle Hemphill
Old: Jay Sawvel

OCT. 5
VIRGINIA TECH AT MIAMI
The two flagship programs in the ACC Coastal went a combined 8–8 in league play in 2018. Which team can take a step forward this fall?

OCT. 12
FLORIDA STATE AT CLEMSON
Clemson is the first ACC team with four straight wins over Florida State. It will be a significant surprise if the Tigers don't make it five in a row.

OCT. 26
DUKE AT NORTH CAROLINA
Mack Brown won his final eight games against Duke during his first tour of duty in Chapel Hill. Times have changed: Duke has won three straight.

NOV. 29
VIRGINIA TECH AT VIRGINIA
Virginia's losing streak against the hated Hokies has reached 15 seasons. This, however, could be the year the Cavs break through. Really.

NOV. 30
FLORIDA STATE AT FLORIDA
Willie Taggart's first season in Tallahassee was capped off by a 41–14 loss at home to Florida. He won't be the coach for long if that continues.

NOV. 30
LOUISVILLE AT KENTUCKY
Scott Satterfield will end Year 1 as the boss at Louisville with a short trip to Lexington. This is a game Cardinal fans expect to win.

Trevor Lawrence, Clemson

ACC Returning Leaders

Passing	ATT	COMP	PCT	YDS	TD	INT	AVG/G
Ryan Willis, Virginia Tech	364	213	58.5	2,716	24	9	226.3
Trevor Lawrence, Clemson	397	259	65.2	3,280	30	4	218.7
Bryce Perkins, Virginia	349	225	64.5	2,680	25	9	206.2

Rushing	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD	LONG	AVG/G
AJ Dillon, Boston College	227	1,108	4.9	10	74	110.8
Travis Etienne, Clemson	204	1,658	8.1	24	75	110.5
Cade Carney, Wake Forest	188	1,005	5.4	8	48	77.3

Receiving	REC	YDS	AVG	TD	LONG	AVG/G
Justyn Ross, Clemson	46	1,000	21.7	9	74	66.7
Tee Higgins, Clemson	59	936	15.9	12	64	62.4
Tamorrion Terry, Florida State	35	744	21.3	8	78	62.0

Tackles: Justin Strnad, Wake Forest (105), Rayshard Ashby, Virginia Tech (105)
Sacks: Kendall Coleman, Syracuse (10.0), Alton Robinson, Syracuse (10.0)
Interceptions: Andre Cisco, Syracuse (7), Stanford Samuels III, Florida State (4)

2018 ACC Standings

ATLANTIC	ACC	OVERALL	COASTAL	ACC	OVERALL
Clemson	8-0	15-0	Pittsburgh	6-2	7-7
Syracuse	6-2	10-3	Georgia Tech	5-3	7-6
NC State	5-3	9-4	Virginia	4-4	8-5
Boston College	4-4	7-5	Miami	4-4	7-6
Wake Forest	3-5	7-6	Virginia Tech	4-4	6-7
Florida State	3-5	5-7	Duke	3-5	8-5
Louisville	0-8	2-10	North Carolina	1-7	2-9

2018 Bowl Results

Independence Bowl: Duke 56, Temple 27
Birmingham Bowl: Wake Forest 37, Memphis 34
Military Bowl: Cincinnati 35, Virginia Tech 31
First Responder Bowl: Boston College vs. Boise State (Canceled)
Belk Bowl: Virginia 28, South Carolina 0
Pinstripe Bowl: Wisconsin 35, Miami (Fla.) 3
Quick Lane Bowl: Minnesota 34, Georgia Tech 10
Gator Bowl: Texas A&M 52, NC State 13
Camping World Bowl: Syracuse 34, West Virginia 18
Sun Bowl: Stanford 14, Pittsburgh 13
Cotton Bowl (CFP Semifinal): Clemson 30, Notre Dame 3
CFP National Championship Game: Clemson 44, Alabama 16

2018 ACC Team Stats & Rankings

Offense

	SCORING	RUSH	PASS	TOTAL
Boston College	32.0 (6)	189.1 (8)	215.3 (9)	404.3 (9)
Clemson	44.3 (1)	248.2 (2)	279.0 (2)	527.2 (1)
Duke	29.4 (8)	159.6 (11)	246.1 (7)	405.7 (8)
Florida State	21.9 (13)	91.1 (14)	270.1 (3)	361.2 (12)
Georgia Tech	33.6 (4)	325.0 (1)	83.8 (14)	408.8 (7)
Louisville	19.8 (14)	141.5 (13)	211.1 (11)	352.6 (14)
Miami	28.8 (9)	191.5 (7)	167.3 (12)	358.8 (13)
NC State	33.8 (3)	142.9 (12)	313.2 (1)	456.1 (3)
North Carolina	27.4 (11)	193.0 (6)	249.1 (6)	442.1 (5)
Pittsburgh	25.6 (12)	227.9 (3)	141.8 (13)	369.7 (11)
Syracuse	40.2 (2)	200.1 (5)	264.7 (4)	464.8 (2)
Virginia	28.5 (10)	173.2 (10)	211.6 (10)	384.8 (10)
Virginia Tech	29.8 (7)	174.3 (9)	253.8 (5)	428.2 (6)
Wake Forest	32.8 (5)	213.7 (4)	236.1 (8)	449.8 (4)

Defense

	SCORING	RUSH	PASS	TOTAL
Boston College	25.7 (5)	154.9 (6)	247.9 (10)	402.8 (7)
Clemson	13.1 (1)	96.3 (1)	189.6 (3)	285.9 (2)
Duke	27.4 (7)	209.3 (11)	199.5 (4)	408.8 (8)
Florida State	31.5 (11)	147.7 (5)	268.7 (14)	416.3 (9)
Georgia Tech	29.3 (9)	157.9 (7)	211.7 (7)	369.6 (4)
Louisville	44.1 (14)	277.3 (14)	206.3 (5)	483.5 (14)
Miami	19.5 (2)	143.3 (3)	135.6 (1)	278.9 (1)
NC State	24.9 (4)	131.5 (2)	261.1 (11)	392.6 (6)
North Carolina	34.5 (13)	218.8 (13)	228.8 (9)	447.6 (12)
Pittsburgh	27.8 (8)	178.3 (9)	209.3 (6)	387.6 (5)
Syracuse	27.0 (6)	162.5 (8)	264.1 (12)	426.5 (10)
Virginia	20.1 (3)	147.5 (4)	183.0 (2)	330.5 (3)
Virginia Tech	31.0 (10)	210.3 (12)	228.4 (8)	438.7 (11)
Wake Forest	33.3 (12)	192.5 (10)	266.1 (13)	458.6 (13)

ALL-ACC TEAM

First-Team Offense

QB	**Trevor Lawrence**	6-6	215	So.	Clemson
RB	**AJ Dillon**	6-0	250	Jr.	Boston College
RB	**Travis Etienne**	5-10	215	Jr.	Clemson
AP	**Deon Jackson**	6-0	220	Jr.	Duke
WR	**Tee Higgins**	6-4	205	Jr.	Clemson
WR	**Justyn Ross**	6-4	205	So.	Clemson
TE	**Brevin Jordan**	6-3	245	So.	Miami
C	**Jimmy Morrissey**	6-3	305	Jr.	Pittsburgh
OL	**Tremayne Anchrum**	6-2	310	Sr.	Clemson
OL	**Mekhi Becton**	6-7	355	Jr.	Louisville
OL	**Charlie Heck**	6-8	310	Sr.	North Carolina
OL	**John Simpson**	6-4	330	Sr.	Clemson

Deon Jackson, Duke

Alton Robinson, Syracuse

First-Team Defense

DL	**Jonathan Garvin**	6-4	250	Jr.	Miami
DL	**Alton Robinson**	6-4	257	Sr.	Syracuse
DL	**Xavier Thomas**	6-2	260	So.	Clemson
DL	**Marvin Wilson**	6-5	314	Jr.	Florida State
LB	**Michael Pinckney**	6-1	220	Sr.	Miami
LB	**Shaquille Quarterman**	6-1	235	Sr.	Miami
LB	**Isaiah Simmons**	6-4	225	Jr.	Clemson
CB	**Trajan Bandy**	5-9	188	Jr.	Miami
CB	**Bryce Hall**	6-1	200	Sr.	Virginia
S	**Andre Cisco**	6-0	198	So.	Syracuse
S	**Damar Hamlin**	6-1	195	Sr.	Pittsburgh

First-Team Specialists

K	**Andre Szmyt**	6-1	186	So.	Syracuse
P	**Sterling Hofrichter**	5-9	195	Sr.	Syracuse
KR	**Joe Reed**	6-1	215	Sr.	Virginia
PR	**Sean Riley**	5-8	170	Sr.	Syracuse

SECOND-TEAM OFFENSE

QB	**Bryce Perkins**	6-3	210	Sr.	Virginia
RB	**Cam Akers**	5-11	212	Jr.	Florida State
RB	**Cade Carney**	5-11	215	Sr.	Wake Forest
AP	**Sean Riley**	5-8	170	Sr.	Syracuse
WR	**Damon Hazelton**	6-2	222	Jr.	Virginia Tech
WR	**Tamorrion Terry**	6-4	203	So.	Florida State
TE	**Dalton Keene**	6-4	246	Jr.	Virginia Tech
C	**Sean Pollard**	6-5	320	Sr.	Clemson
OL	**Christian Darrisaw**	6-5	295	So.	Virginia Tech
OL	**Navaughn Donaldson**	6-6	340	Jr.	Miami
OL	**Ben Petrula**	6-5	310	Jr.	Boston College
OL	**Airon Servais**	6-6	282	Jr.	Syracuse

SECOND-TEAM DEFENSE

DL	**Carlos Basham Jr.**	6-5	275	Jr.	Wake Forest
DL	**Kendall Coleman**	6-3	252	Sr.	Syracuse
DL	**Jason Strowbridge**	6-4	285	Sr.	North Carolina
DL	**Rashad Weaver**	6-5	265	Jr.	Pittsburgh
LB	**Rayshard Ashby**	5-10	230	Jr.	Virginia Tech
LB	**Charles Snowden**	6-7	225	Jr.	Virginia
LB	**Justin Strnad**	6-3	230	Sr.	Wake Forest
CB	**Essang Bassey**	5-10	190	Sr.	Wake Forest
CB	**A.J. Terrell**	6-2	190	Jr.	Clemson
S	**Joey Blount**	6-1	190	Jr.	Virginia
S	**Jarius Morehead**	6-1	220	Sr.	NC State

SECOND-TEAM SPECIALISTS

K	**Christopher Dunn**	5-8	177	So.	NC State
P	**Oscar Bradburn**	6-1	211	Jr.	Virginia Tech
KR	**Maurice Ffrench**	5-11	200	Sr.	Pittsburgh
PR	**Dazz Newsome**	5-11	185	Jr.	North Carolina

Cade Carney
Wake Forest

Dez Fitzpatrick
Louisville

Jarius Morehead
NC State

Dane Jackson
Pittsburgh

THIRD-TEAM OFFENSE

QB	**Tommy DeVito**	6-2	207	So.	Syracuse
RB	**DeeJay Dallas**	5-10	220	Jr.	Miami
RB	**Michael Carter**	5-10	195	Jr.	North Carolina
AP	**Hassan Hall**	6-0	186	So.	Louisville
WR	**Dez Fitzpatrick**	6-2	202	Jr.	Louisville
WR	**Hasise Dubois**	6-3	215	Sr.	Virginia
TE	**Carl Tucker**	6-2	255	Sr.	North Carolina
C	**Kenny Cooper**	6-3	305	Sr.	Georgia Tech
OL	**Justin Herron**	6-5	290	Sr.	Wake Forest
OL	**Rakavius Chambers**	6-3	310	Jr.	Duke
OL	**Joshua Fedd-Jackson**	6-3	329	Jr.	NC State
OL	**Evan Adams**	6-6	341	Sr.	Syracuse

THIRD-TEAM DEFENSE

DL	**Victor Dimukeje**	6-2	265	Jr.	Duke
DL	**Eli Hanback**	6-4	300	Sr.	Virginia
DL	**Tanner Karafa**	6-3	285	Sr.	Boston College
DL	**James Smith-Williams**	6-3	270	Sr.	NC State
LB	**Dax Hollifield**	6-1	243	So.	Virginia Tech
LB	**Jordan Mack**	6-2	230	Sr.	Virginia
LB	**Max Richardson**	6-0	230	Jr.	Boston College
CB	**Christopher Fredrick**	5-11	197	Sr.	Syracuse
CB	**Dane Jackson**	6-0	190	Sr.	Pittsburgh
S	**Jaiden Lars-Woodbey**	6-3	223	So.	Florida State
S	**K'Von Wallace**	5-11	210	Sr.	Clemson

THIRD-TEAM SPECIALISTS

K	**Alex Kessman**	6-3	190	Jr.	Pittsburgh
P	**Pressley Harvin III**	6-0	245	Jr.	Georgia Tech
KR	**Juanyeh Thomas**	6-3	200	So.	Georgia Tech
PR	**D.J. Matthews**	5-10	156	Jr.	Florida State

Clemson Athletics; Duke: Margaret Bowles; Robinson, Jackson: Bruce Schwartzman; Carney: Walter G. Arce Sr.; Fitzpatrick: Harrison McClary

Boston College **Eagles**

National Forecast: **61** • ACC Atlantic Prediction: **6** • Projected Record: **6-6, 3-5 ACC**

AJ Dillon

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Steve Addazio
Record at School: 38-38 (6 years)
Career Record: 51-49 (8 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Mike Bajakian
Defensive Coordinator: Bill Sheridan
Location: Chestnut Hill, MA
Stadium: Alumni Stadium (44,500)

KEY EAGLES

AJ DILLON, RB Finished with 1,108 yards and 10 touchdowns as a sophomore despite missing two games, and should be a Heisman Trophy candidate.

ANTHONY BROWN, QB Has started 22 games at BC and threw 20 TDs last year, second most by a sophomore in school history.

BEN PETRULA, OT Earned All-ACC honorable mention after starting all 12 games at right tackle last season.

KEY LOSSES

ZACH ALLEN, DE Finished in the top 10 in BC history in both sacks and tackles for a loss.

CHRIS LINDSTROM, OG Started 47 career games at BC and was named an All-ACC first-team selection as a senior after giving up zero sacks and just three hurries.

HAMP CHEEVERS, CB Started 15 consecutive games at right cornerback and tied for the national lead with seven interceptions last season.

RISING STAR

The son of Tennessee Titans coach and former Patriots linebacker Mike Vrabel, right tackle **TYLER VRABEL** is ahead of schedule as a redshirt freshman and will likely start for the Eagles this season.

Boston College's 2018 season had so much promise, but it ended with an all too familiar result.

In early November, the campus was buzzing when College GameDay returned for the first time in nine years. The Eagles were ranked in the top 20 with an outside shot at making the ACC Championship Game as they hosted Clemson, but a blowout loss started a late-season tailspin. BC dropped its next two regular-season games before its bowl game was canceled due to weather, abruptly ending its campaign with a 7–5 record.

BC decided the season was good enough to give coach Steve Addazio a two-year contract extension through 2022, but it remains to be seen if he can take the Eagles to the next level. Despite making five bowl games in Addazio's six seasons, BC has yet to win more than seven games or finish better than .500 in the ACC. And after losing key players on both sides of the ball, Addazio faces a tough challenge in plugging holes and trying to regain the momentum from a year ago in what some believe to be a make-or-break season.

OFFENSE With former offensive coordinator Scot Loeffler leaving BC to become the head coach at Bowling Green, Addazio's first coaching change came when he hired Mike Bajakian, formerly the quarterbacks coach for the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, to become his new OC. And Bajakian certainly has plenty to work with.

BC experienced most of its turnover on the offensive line, where four starters graduated, but the Eagles still return experience and depth in the trenches. Ben Petrula, an All-ACC honorable mention pick last season, is the lone returning full-time starter and will likely shift from right tackle to left, and he'll be joined by a group that has Addazio excited. Most notably, Alec Lindstrom will likely take over at center, and Addazio believes he'll be "elite."

The line will once again work to create holes for a Heisman Trophy candidate. AJ Dillon is back after rushing for 1,108 yards and 10 touchdowns and earning All-ACC honors despite missing two games to injury. One area where he could stand to improve is the receiving game — he had just eight receptions for 41 yards last season — to pair with his explosive running ability. He has plenty of depth behind him, with Travis Levy and David Bailey also back.

Quarterback Anthony Brown is back to run the offense, and he has his top target returning in Kobay White, who emerged as a capable threat last season. Brown has improved as a passer but will need to be even better if the Eagles want to do some damage in the ACC. Elijah Robinson will likely start opposite White at receiver. Addazio says that both Levy and Ben Glines are talented players, and he'll try to involve them in both the running and receiving game.

BC lost All-ACC tight end Tommy Sweeney but returns plenty of experience for its two-tight-end sets. Korab Idrizi and Hunter Long project as the starters, but the Eagles will use all of their tight ends.

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	Virginia Tech
Sept.	7	Richmond
Sept.	13	Kansas
Sept.	21	at Rutgers
Sept.	28	Wake Forest
Oct.	5	at Louisville
Oct.	19	NC State
Oct.	26	at Clemson
Nov.	2	at Syracuse
Nov.	9	Florida State
Nov.	23	at Notre Dame
Nov.	30	at Pittsburgh

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 7-5, 4-4 ACC

Sept.	1	Massachusetts	W	55-21
Sept.	8	Holy Cross	W	62-14
Sept.	13	at Wake Forest	W	41-34
Sept.	22	at Purdue	L	13-30
Sept.	29	Temple	W	45-35
Oct.	6	NC State	L	23-28
Oct.	13	Louisville	W	38-20
Oct.	26	Miami (Fla.)	W	27-14
Nov.	3	at Virginia Tech	W	31-21
Nov.	10	Clemson	L	7-27
Nov.	17	at Florida State	L	21-22
Nov.	24	Syracuse	L	21-42
Dec.	26	vs. Boise State #		Canceled

#First Responder Bowl

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	ACC	NATIONAL
Scoring	32.0 ppg	6	39
Rushing	189.1 ypg	8	48
Passing	215.3 ypg	9	81
Total	404.3 ypg	9	68
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**ACC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	25.7 ppg	5	55
Rushing	154.9 ypg	6	53
Passing	247.9 ypg	10	96
Total	402.8 ypg	7	70
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**ACC**	**NATIONAL**
+7	+0.58	3	23

2019 RECRUITS

1. Patrick Garwo, RB, Levittown, PA
2. Sam Johnson, QB, Wixom, MI
3. Shitta Sillah, LB, Somerset, NJ
4. Bryce Sebastian, WR, West Haven, CT
5. Spencer Bono, DE, Cleves, OH
6. Jack Conley, OT, New Canaan, CT
7. Blerim Rustemi, OG, Lincoln Park, NJ
8. Jackson Ness, DE, Columbus, OH
9. Izaiah Henderson, DE, Hazlet, NJ
10. Josh DeBerry, CB, Warren, MI
11. Jalen Williams, S, Fort Washington, MD
12. Zay Flowers, CB, Fort Lauderdale, FL
13. Connor Grieco, S, Montvale, NJ
14. Ethon Williams, WR, Arnold, MD
15. Ireland Burke, DT, Jamaica, NY
16. Christian Mahogany, OG, Elmwood Park, NJ
17. Mike Ciaffoni, DT, Sudbury, MA
18. Steve Lubischer, S, Oceanport, NJ

Recruits ranked according to the 247SportsComposite

Harrison McClary

ADVANCED STATS

5 Factors: College Football's Most Important Stats

Field Position[1]		Rank
Offense	32.8	11
Defense	28.8	54
Margin	+4.0	27
Efficiency[2]		**Rank**
Offense	37.8%	110
Defense	39.9%	51
Margin	-2.1%	91
Explosiveness[3]		**Rank**
Offense	5.4	93
Defense	5.2	35
Margin	+0.2	66
Finishing Drives[4]		**Rank**
Offense	4.6	69
Defense	3.9	21
Margin	+0.7	25
Adjusted TO Margin[5]		**Rank**
Projected	4.8	34
Actual	7	23
Margin	+2.2	46

KEY: **1**-Average starting field position by yard line; **2**-Rate of successful plays (gaining 50% of necessary yards on 1st down, 70% on 2nd down, 100% on 3rd down); **3**-Explosiveness=yards per play; **4**-Points per trip inside 40-yard line; **5**-TO margin accounting for "luck" • Advanced stats provided by Bill Connelly of SB Nation

NUMBERS TO KNOW

33

Tight ends accounted for 33 percent of BC's pass targets in 2018, second most in FBS. With that level of attention, you'd have maybe liked more production: TEs caught a combined 67 passes for 825 yards and eight TDs.

37.8

BC's offensive success rate (percentage of plays that gained at least 50 percent of necessary yardage on first down, 70 percent on second, or 100 percent on third or fourth) was 37.8 percent, just 110th in FBS and 13th in the ACC.

30/6.5/13

Replacing ends Zach Allen and Wyatt Ray could be particularly tricky. Only two ACC teams boasted two players with at least 30.0 tackles, 6.5 sacks, and 13 run stuffs (stops at or behind the line): Clemson and BC.

DEFENSE Addazio wasn't finished remaking the coaching staff after hiring Bajakian. He also shook things up on defense by promoting linebackers coach Bill Sheridan to be BC's new defensive coordinator, and demoting Jim Reid, who served as the DC for the last three seasons, to defensive ends coach. The unit hasn't lacked talent but never seemed to reach its full potential under Reid. Sheridan faces a big challenge in trying to improve a unit that lost most of its starters. Only five defensive players with at least one collegiate start return, and at the beginning of spring ball, Sheridan saw only four locks to be starters this season — Tanner Karafa, Max Richardson, Isaiah McDuffie and Brandon Sebastian. The rest is wide open.

The weakness of this group is the defensive line. Karafa is the only returning starter, as the Eagles are tasked with replacing ends Zach Allen and Wyatt Ray, both of whom left for the NFL. Brandon Barlow, who played well at the end of last year, will likely start on one end, and sophomore Marcus Valdez will line up on the other. TJ Rayam figures to start at the other tackle spot next to Karafa.

The Eagles also have big shoes to fill in the secondary. Hamp Cheevers, who tied for the national lead with seven interceptions last year, declared early for the NFL Draft, and safeties Lukas Denis and Will Harris are gone. Sebastian is the most experienced corner returning, and Tate Haynes, who may be the best athlete in the secondary, will likely start opposite him.

SPECIALISTS Danny Longman and Grant Carlson return as BC's kicker and punter, respectively, but the Eagles have more shoes to fill in the return game. Michael Walker is gone after leading the nation with 1,294 return yards last year. Glines figures to be the kick returner, while Jason Maitre should take over punts.

FINAL ANALYSIS Led by Dillon and a new-look but strong offensive line, BC's offense should be productive, but the Eagles will only go as far as their defense — especially the line — can take them. BC should be good enough to make another bowl game, but unless Sheridan can press all the right buttons on defense, it's hard to imagine the Eagles taking a bigger step.

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (6)

WR	**9**	**Kobay White (Jr.)**	19	Ben Glines (Sr.)
WR	1	Elijah Robinson (Sr.)	87	Noah Jordan-Williams (So.)
LT	**64**	**Ben Petrula (Jr.)**	71	Nate Emer (So.)
LG	66	Anthony Palazzolo (Sr.)	74	Finn Dirstine (Fr.)
C	72	Alec Lindstrom (So.)	52	Cam Reddy (Fr.)
RG	**70**	**John Phillips (Sr.)**	56	Adam Korutz (Jr.)
RT	78	Tyler Vrabel (Fr.)		Hayden Mahoney (Sr.)
TE	85	Korab Idrizi (Sr.)	84	Jake Burt (Sr.)
TE	80	Hunter Long (So.)	**81**	**Chris Garrison (Sr.)**
QB	**13**	**Anthony Brown (Jr.)**	4	EJ Perry (Jr.)
RB	**2**	**AJ Dillon (Jr.)**	23	Travis Levy (Jr.)

DEFENSE (3)

Returning Starters in Bold

DE	44	Brandon Barlow (Jr.)		Spencer Bono (Fr.)
DT	**48**	**Tanner Karafa (Sr.)**	92	Izaiah Henderson (Fr.)
NT	99	TJ Rayam (Jr.)	91	Jaleel Berry (So.)
DE	97	Marcus Valdez (So.)	41	Joey Luchetti (Fr.)
SLB	55	Isaiah McDuffie (Jr.)	32	Nick DeNucci (Fr.)
MLB	28	John Lamont (Jr.)	16	Davon Jones (Sr.)
WLB	**14**	**Max Richardson (Jr.)**	36	Paul Theobald Jr. (So.)
CB	**10**	**Brandon Sebastian (So.)**	38	Jason Maitre (Fr.)
CB	7	Tate Haynes (So.)	20	Elijah Jones (Fr.)
SS	25	Mehdi El Attrach (Sr.)	30	Jahmin Muse (So.)
FS	18	Mike Palmer (Jr.)	5	Nolan Borgersen (Sr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	37	Danny Longman (So.)	**KR**	19	Ben Glines (Sr.)
P	95	Grant Carlson (Jr.)	**PR**	38	Jason Maitre (Fr.)

2018 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Anthony Brown	**285**	**158**	**2,121**	**20**	**9**
EJ Perry	**39**	**27**	**277**	**2**	**0**

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD
AJ Dillon	**227**	**1,108**	**4.9**	**10**
Ben Glines	**68**	**380**	**5.6**	**3**
David Bailey	**57**	**253**	**4.4**	**2**
Travis Levy	**49**	**215**	**4.4**	**2**

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Kobay White	**33**	**526**	**15.9**	**3**
Tommy Sweeney	32	348	10.9	3
Jeff Smith	20	387	19.4	6
Travis Levy	**19**	**160**	**8.4**	**0**

KICKING: Colton Lichtenberg, 5-8 FGs, 44 pts.; **Danny Longman, 1-1 FGs, 6 pts.**

TACKLES: Connor Strachan, 91; **Isaiah McDuffie, 85**

SACKS: Wyatt Ray, 9.0

INTERCEPTIONS: Hamp Cheevers, 7

Returning Players in **Bold**

SCOUTING THE EAGLES

OPPOSING COACHES SIZE UP BOSTON COLLEGE

"You finally saw what they could be capable of in the first half of last year, but they're losing so much, especially on both lines, that it's almost impossible to think they can do that again this year. You know exactly what you're getting with Steve Addazio, so they're not going to come out with something radically different to compensate for losing their big bodies. That's what he thrives on; it's just not possible to quick fix. … If they can get the line working, it's going to be AJ Dillon or bust for them. The good news is, that's how they want to play offense anyway, hitting you 30, 35 times a game with a power back. … The quarterback (Anthony Brown) is solid but not really special; they don't ask him to win games, but they'll probably need him to do a little bit more. … They're losing a really great defense. They could make you make really bad decisions throwing the ball, and they had a lot of turnovers. Really physical secondary, ball-hawking guys. You don't just plug and play to replace guys like that at BC. … It's obvious Steve knows he's on the hot seat; he fired a lot of his guys and tried to do an overhaul. They have new coordinators. The defense will look about the same with Bill Sheridan. Mike Bajakian might be able to open them up a little bit more, but that's not really how they're built."

Clemson **Tigers**

National Forecast: **2** • ACC Atlantic Prediction: **1** • Projected Record: **13-0, 8-0 ACC**

Trevor Lawrence

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Dabo Swinney
Record at School: 116-30 (10+ years)
Career Record: 116-30 (10+ years)
Offensive Coordinator: Tony Elliott, Jeff Scott
Defensive Coordinator: Brent Venables
Location: Clemson, SC
Stadium: Clemson Memorial Stadium (81,500)

KEY TIGERS

TREVOR LAWRENCE, QB Threw for 30 touchdowns and four interceptions in 2018. Not bad for a true freshman.

TRAVIS ETIENNE, RB Lawrence and Etienne — one of the nation's most underrated offensive players — could both be in New York for the Heisman ceremony.

JUSTYN ROSS, WR Alabama native is already a man among boys, and he's just a sophomore.

KEY LOSSES

CHRISTIAN WILKINS, DT Wilkins looked like the best D-lineman in college football in the national championship game.

CLELIN FERRELL, DE Ferrell shook off a painful turf-toe injury late in the year as the Tigers chased a national title.

MITCH HYATT, OT You hardly ever noticed him, and that's a good thing for a left tackle. A consistent technician who kept pressure off the QBs.

RISING STAR

DERION KENDRICK would've been an instant star on most other teams, but at Clemson he had to wait his turn. He made the move from wideout to corner in the spring and was an absolute natural. Coaches can't stop gushing about how quickly he picked up the position.

Even after winning the 2016 national title with Deshaun Watson and a bunch of stars who were playing their final game against Alabama, Dabo Swinney kept saying the best was yet to come.

Sure enough, Clemson took it a step further last season by crushing the Crimson Tide in a 28-point dismantling that still reverberates. In Swinney's 10th season as head coach, the Tigers made a resounding case that they are at the very least Alabama's equal.

Since a loss at Georgia Tech late in the 2014 season, Clemson has won 58 of 62 games while claiming two national titles and appearing in four consecutive playoffs.

There are major losses from the defensive side of the ball, but there's plenty of talent filling the voids left by Christian Wilkins, Clelin Ferrell, Austin Bryant and others. The presence of all that star power on offense suggests the Tigers aren't slowing down anytime soon.

OFFENSE A year ago, Trevor Lawrence already had a rock-star presence around Clemson after enrolling early and putting forth a stellar spring. It seemed only a matter of time before he'd supplant Kelly Bryant as the starter.

Lawrence, though, exceeded even the rosiest expectations by showing he was the best quarterback in college football by the end of the season. Lawrence simply made it look easy in the CFB Playoff, during which he sliced up Notre Dame and Alabama through the air.

The truly scary part for opponents is that Lawrence is around for two more seasons, and he has an embarrassment of riches around him.

The Tide and Irish couldn't cover Justyn Ross and Tee Higgins. The former is back for his sophomore season. The latter is poised to have a stellar junior season and turn pro. Receivers coach Jeff Scott has two more future stars in freshmen Joseph Ngata and Frank Ladson Jr. Both enrolled early, and Swinney says they're as ready as any freshmen he's ever had.

All running back Travis Etienne did was average 8.1 yards per carry last year as a sophomore while amassing 24 rushing touchdowns. Behind Etienne is sophomore Lyn-J Dixon. Clemson could have the most explosive backfield in college football.

Clemson's star power took a hit in the spring when wideout Amari Rodgers tore an ACL, but Swinney says that Rodgers could recover in time to play in 2019.

The offensive line lost left tackle Mitch Hyatt and center Justin Falcinelli, but the replacements are more than capable. Left guard John Simpson highlights the group of returning linemen.

DEFENSE Wilkins, Ferrell and Bryant created surprise when they decided to return for the 2019 season. Those decisions were probably worth a national championship trophy, because those were the key figures in Clemson holding Alabama's pyrotechnic offense to 16 points.

In addition to those departures, defensive tackle Dexter Lawrence, corner Trayvon Mullen and linebacker Tre Lamar declared for the NFL Draft. But it was crucial

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	29	Georgia Tech
Sept.	7	Texas A&M
Sept.	14	at Syracuse
Sept.	21	Charlotte
Sept.	28	at North Carolina
Oct.	12	Florida State
Oct.	19	at Louisville
Oct.	26	Boston College
Nov.	2	Wofford
Nov.	9	at NC State
Nov.	16	Wake Forest
Nov.	30	at South Carolina

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 15-0, 8-0 ACC

Sept.	1	Furman	W	48-7
Sept.	8	at Texas A&M	W	28-26
Sept.	15	Georgia Southern	W	38-7
Sept.	22	at Georgia Tech	W	49-21
Sept.	29	Syracuse	W	27-23
Oct.	6	at Wake Forest	W	63-3
Oct.	20	NC State	W	41-7
Oct.	27	at Florida State	W	59-10
Nov.	3	Louisville	W	77-16
Nov.	10	at Boston College	W	27-7
Nov.	17	Duke	W	35-6
Nov.	24	South Carolina	W	56-35
Dec.	1	vs. Pittsburgh #	W	42-10
Dec.	29	vs. Notre Dame %	W	30-3
Jan.	7	vs. Alabama &	W	44-16

#Charlotte %CFB Playoff Semifinal
& CFB Playoff National Championship

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	ACC	NATIONAL
Scoring	44.3 ppg	1	4
Rushing	248.2 ypg	2	10
Passing	279.0 ypg	2	23
Total	527.2 ypg	1	3
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**ACC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	13.1 ppg	1	1
Rushing	96.3 ypg	1	4
Passing	189.6 ypg	3	24
Total	285.9 ypg	2	5
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**ACC**	**NATIONAL**
+7	+0.47	4	29

2019 RECRUITS

1. Andrew Booth, CB, Dacula, GA
2. Frank Ladson, WR, Miami, FL
3. Joseph Ngata, WR, Folsom, CA
4. Will Putnam, OG, Tampa, FL
5. Sheridan Jones, CB, Norfolk, VA
6. Tyler Davis, DT, Apopka, FL
7. Joseph Charleston, S, Alpharetta, GA
8. Bryton Constantin, LB, Baton Rouge, LA
9. Taisum Phommachanh, QB, Bridgeport, CT
10. Chez Mellusi, RB, Naples, FL
11. LaVonta Bentley, LB, Birmingham, AL
12. Jaelyn Lay, TE, Atlanta, GA
13. Kane Patterson, LB, Brentwood, TN
14. Logan Cash, DE, Winder, GA
15. Keith Maguire, LB, Media, PA
16. Tayquon Johnson, DT, Williamsport, MD
17. Jalyn Phillips, S, Lawrenceville, GA
18. Etinosa Reuben, DE, Kansas City, MO
19. Hunter Rayburn, OG, Pensacola, FL
20. Brannon Spector, WR, Calhoun, GA
21. Greg Williams, LB, Swansea, SC
22. Ray Thornton, S, Columbus , AL
23. Ruke Orhorhoro, DE, Lagos, Nigeria
24. Lannden Zanders, S, Shelby, NC
25. Davis Allen, TE, Calhoun, GA
26. Michel Dukes, RB, North Charleston, SC
27. Kaleb Boateng, OT, Fort Lauderdale, FL
28. Aidan Swanson, P, Tampa, FL
29. Mason Trotter, OG, Spartanburg, SC

Recruits ranked according to the 247SportsComposite

Paul Abell

ADVANCED STATS

5 Factors: College Football's Most Important Stats

Field Position[1]		Rank
Offense	31.0	41
Defense	26.9	12
Margin	+4.1	21

Efficiency[2]		Rank
Offense	49.5%	7
Defense	33.3%	4
Margin	+16.2%	2

Explosiveness[3]		Rank
Offense	7.3	3
Defense	4.2	2
Margin	+3.1	1

Finishing Drives[4]		Rank
Offense	5.4	5
Defense	3.0	1
Margin	+2.4	1

Adjusted TO Margin[5]		Rank
Projected	8.4	6
Actual	7	23
Margin	-1.4	78

KEY: 1-Average starting field position by yard line; **2**-Rate of successful plays (gaining 50% of necessary yards on 1st down, 70% on 2nd down, 100% on 3rd down); **3**-Explosiveness=yards per play; **4**-Points per trip inside 40-yard line; **5**-TO margin accounting for "luck" • Advanced stats provided by Bill Connelly of SB Nation

NUMBERS TO KNOW

2.4

Clemson averaged 5.4 points per scoring opportunity (first downs inside the opponent's 40) in 2018, which ranked fifth in FBS, and allowed just 3.0 points per chance, which ranked first. The Tigers scored 2.4 points more per trip, which means you needed to create nearly twice as many chances to score as many points. No one could.

2.9

The Tigers' run game exploded in 2018 — as in, it was quite explosive. They averaged 2.9 rushes per game of 20-plus yards, second in FBS. Travis Etienne was responsible for 23 of those carries by himself; only Memphis' Darrell Henderson had more.

62/76

Clemson must replace 62 percent of its tackles for a loss and 76 percent of its sacks from last year's title team.

that three important players decided to stay: linebacker Isaiah Simmons and safeties K'Von Wallace and Tanner Muse.

Had those three left, Brent Venables would be facing a major rebuilding job in his eighth season as Clemson's defensive coordinator. But Simmons, Wallace and Muse figure to give this defense not just experience and talent but also a calming air of leadership.

The interior of the defensive line is the biggest question after the loss of Wilkins, Lawrence and Albert Huggins. Nyles Pinckney and Jordan Williams are the presumed starters at tackle, but both of them missed the spring with injuries.

The positive of those absences was an opportunity for inexperienced players to get significant reps during spring practice. Xavier Kelly is vying to be in the rotation, and freshman Tyler Davis made an immediate impact upon enrolling early.

Mullen's corner spot, opposite A.J. Terrell, is vacant. Receiver Derion Kendrick moved to corner in the spring and showed immediately that he was one of the top two corners on the roster.

Losing Lamar and Kendall Joseph at linebacker is a big hit, but Venables has several older guys who are ready to start. The top two inside linebackers are James Skalski and Shaq Smith.

SPECIALISTS Placekicker Greg Huegel is gone after starting 48 games over four years. B.T. Potter has a big leg and is competing with Steven Sawicki to be Huegel's replacement. Punter Will Spiers was inconsistent last season as a sophomore but shined in the national championship game. Rodgers' ACL surgery means the Tigers need a punt returner, and Kendrick figures to be the guy there until Rodgers returns.

FINAL ANALYSIS Clemson has dominated the ACC, and it appears the gap is widening. The Tigers suffered ACC hiccups in 2016 (Pittsburgh) and 2017 (Syracuse), but it's hard to see that happening this year. The loss of so many great defensive players makes that side of the ball worth monitoring, but a lot of points are going to be needed to keep up with Clemson's frightening offense.

Once again, the Tigers seem on a collision course with Alabama. The difference this time: Clemson knows it's good enough to not merely hang with the Crimson Tide, but humiliate them.

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (7)

WR	**5**	**Tee Higgins (Jr.)**	2	Frank Ladson Jr. (Fr.)
WR	17	Cornell Powell (Jr.)	14	Diondre Overton (Sr.)
WR	8	Justyn Ross (So.)	10	Joseph Ngata (Fr.)
LT	79	Jackson Carman (So.)	72	Blake Vinson (So.)
LG	**74**	**John Simpson (Sr.)**	65	Matt Bockhorst (So.)
C	**76**	**Sean Pollard (Sr.)**	62	Cade Stewart (Jr.)
RG	**59**	**Gage Cervenka (Sr.)**	62	Cade Stewart (Jr.)
RT	**73**	**Tremayne Anchrum (Sr.)**	71	Jordan McFadden (Fr.)
TE	25	J.C. Chalk (Jr.)	85	Jaelyn Lay (Fr.)
QB	**16**	**Trevor Lawrence (So.)**	7	Chase Brice (So.)
RB	**9**	**Travis Etienne (Jr.)**	23	Lyn-J Dixon (So.)

DEFENSE (4)

Returning Starters in Bold

DE	3	Xavier Thomas (So.)	7	Justin Mascoll (Fr.)
DT	59	Jordan Williams (So.)	22	Xavier Kelly (Jr.)
DT	44	Nyles Pinckney (Jr.)	13	Tyler Davis (Fr.)
DE	35	Justin Foster (Jr.)	54	Logan Rudolph (So.)
OLB	**11**	**Isaiah Simmons (Jr.)**	6	Mike Jones (Fr.)
ILB	47	James Skalski (Jr.)	43	Chad Smith (Sr.)
ILB	5	Shaq Smith (Jr.)	10	Baylon Spector (So.)
CB	**8**	**A.J. Terrell (Jr.)**	26	Sheridan Jones (Fr.)
CB	1	Derion Kendrick (So.)	2	Kyler McMichael (So.)
S	**19**	**Tanner Muse (Sr.)**	14	Denzel Johnson (Sr.)
S	**12**	**K'Von Wallace (Sr.)**	24	Nolan Turner (Jr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	29	B.T. Potter (So.)	**KR**	9	Travis Etienne (Jr.)
P	48	Will Spiers (Jr.)	**PR**	1	Derion Kendrick (So.)

2018 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Trevor Lawrence	**397**	**259**	**3,280**	**30**	**4**
Kelly Bryant	54	36	461	2	1
Chase Brice	**51**	**32**	**442**	**5**	**3**

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD
Travis Etienne	**204**	**1,658**	**8.1**	**24**
Adam Choice	77	548	7.1	7
Lyn-J Dixon	**62**	**547**	**8.8**	**5**
Tavien Feaster	78	440	5.6	6

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Tee Higgins	**59**	**936**	**15.9**	**12**
Amari Rodgers	**55**	**575**	**10.5**	**4**
Hunter Renfrow	49	544	11.1	1
Justyn Ross	**46**	**1,000**	**21.7**	**9**

KICKING: Greg Huegel, 11-16 FGs, 109 pts.

TACKLES: **Isaiah Simmons, 89**; Kendall Joseph, 81

SACKS: Clelin Ferrell, 11.5

INTERCEPTIONS: **A.J. Terrell, 3**

Returning Players in **Bold**

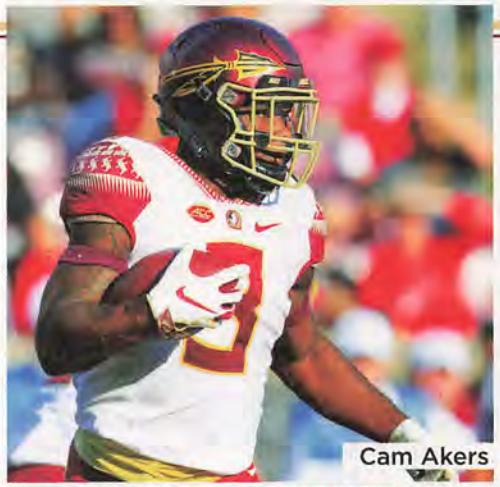
SCOUTING THE TIGERS

OPPOSING COACHES SIZE UP CLEMSON

"What can you say? They're a step-and-a-half past everyone else in the ACC. You can't even call them an SEC-caliber program. They're an Alabama-caliber school, a Georgia-caliber school. Literally. Coaches in our league have been talking about this for almost a decade now; we could see the money they were raising and spending and how it was translating. They're a war machine. … They're going to be very, very good, but they're also going to sell themselves short publicly because of the key losses on defense.. … Brent Venables is a head coach, flat out. He's in a better situation as a DC there than more than half the head jobs in the country, but he's a head coach. He'll have that next set ready. … It's not just that Trevor Lawrence is back, it's that there's so much around him. He might be the best quarterback in the country, but he's also got the deepest amount of skill guys. Travis Etienne, Justyn Ross, Tee Higgins, it's nuts. … Lawrence is smarter than he should be at this point in his career. He's processing stuff like a pro. If you have to worry about something, it's probably the pass rush, but only because the production just went to the league. They have the guys to replace them. A guy like Justin Foster would be a star on someone else's roster."

Florida State **Seminoles**

National Forecast: **33** • ACC Atlantic Prediction: **3** • Projected Record: **7-5, 4-4 ACC**



Cam Akers

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Willie Taggart
Record at School: 5-7 (1 year)
Career Record: 52-57 (9 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Kendal Briles
Defensive Coordinator: Harlon Barnett
Location: Tallahassee, FL
Stadium: Doak Campbell Stadium (79,560)

KEY SEMINOLES

TAMORRION TERRY, WR At 6'4", 203 pounds and with blazing speed, Terry is a threat to score from anywhere on the field.

MARVIN WILSON, DT Despite his great size and strength, Wilson has surprising quickness and a relentless motor.

CAM AKERS, RB After a sophomore slump, Akers is looking to return to his record-breaking freshman form, when he averaged 5.3 yards per carry.

KEY LOSSES

BRIAN BURNS, DE Led team with 10.0 sacks as a junior, and no one else on roster was even close.

NYQWAN MURRAY, WR Leading receiver with 54 receptions for 744 yards and three TDs last season.

DEONDRE FRANCOIS, QB Two-year starter was dismissed from team in February after new information came to light about alleged domestic violence.

RISING STAR

Freshman linebacker **JALEEL MCRAE** enrolled in January and quickly earned a reputation for making big plays. He recorded a slew of interceptions during spring drills and led his team in the spring game with 11 tackles. McRae certainly will factor heavily into the linebacker rotation.

After a brutal inaugural campaign, which ended with a 5–7 record and saw Florida State's consecutive bowl appearance streak end at 36, Willie Taggart has pushed the reset button heading into his second season as the Seminoles head coach.

Very few things went well for Taggart in his first season. He lost to all three major rivals — Miami, Florida and Clemson — and he endured an embarrassing string of blowout defeats. Five opponents blasted FSU by at least 21 points; included in that list was a 59–10 rout in Tallahassee by the eventual national champion Tigers.

As soon as the 2018 campaign ended, Taggart began making changes to every aspect of his program. The overhaul includes three new coaches on offense, a new special teams coordinator and a shuffling of coaching responsibilities on defense.

In the second year of a six-year contract, Taggart is certainly not on the hot seat just yet. But the former USF and Oregon head coach needs to show real progress in 2019 for the sake of recruiting and season ticket sales.

OFFENSE Aside from the names of a few key players, very little will look familiar about FSU's offense this fall — and that should be a good thing. Sophomore James Blackman — he preserved a year of eligibility by playing in only four games in 2018 — is expected to take over at quarterback, assuming he can hold off the challenge from Wisconsin grad transfer Alex Hornibrook. The offensive line is getting a much-needed overhaul. And new assistant coaches will be working with that group, the quarterbacks and the wide receivers.

Kendal Briles, son of former Baylor head coach Art Briles, has taken over as offensive coordinator and hopes to breathe life into the spread attack that sputtered under Taggart and former offensive coordinator Walt Bell. The younger Briles has produced high-powered offenses during previous stints at Baylor, FAU and Houston, and he'll have some very nice skill players with whom to work.

Sophomore Tamorrion Terry is one of the most dynamic receivers in the country — he averaged 21.3 yards per catch and hauled in eight touchdowns on 35 receptions — and junior tailback Cam Akers broke FSU's freshman rushing record in 2017. Akers struggled behind a poor offensive line last season, and the improvement of that group likely will determine FSU's overall success.

Look for Northern Illinois grad transfer Ryan Roberts to help at tackle, but the real key could be the health of junior tackle Landon Dickerson (ankle) and senior guard Cole Minshew (neck), both of whom missed part of last season and most of spring drills.

DEFENSE Defensive coordinator Harlon Barnett's group has major room for improvement. The good news is that the Seminoles return eight of their top 10 tacklers; the bad news is that they ranked last in the ACC in pass defense and were mediocre against the run.

With star pass rusher Brian Burns leaving early for the NFL, junior Marvin Wilson takes over as the leader of

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	vs. Boise State #
Sept.	7	ULM
Sept.	14	at Virginia
Sept.	21	Louisville
Sept.	28	NC State
Oct.	12	at Clemson
Oct.	19	at Wake Forest
Oct.	26	Syracuse
Nov.	2	Miami
Nov.	9	at Boston College
Nov.	16	Alabama State
Nov.	30	at Florida

#Jacksonville

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 5-7, 3-5 ACC

Sept.	3	Virginia Tech	L	3-24
Sept.	8	Samford	W	36-26
Sept.	15	at Syracuse	L	7-30
Sept.	22	Northern Illinois	W	37-19
Sept.	29	at Louisville	W	28-24
Oct.	6	at Miami (Fla.)	L	27-28
Oct.	20	Wake Forest	W	38-17
Oct.	27	Clemson	L	10-59
Nov.	3	at NC State	L	28-47
Nov.	10	at Notre Dame	L	13-42
Nov.	17	Boston College	W	22-21
Nov.	24	Florida	L	14-41

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	ACC	NATIONAL
Scoring	21.9 ppg	13	113
Rushing	91.1 ypg	14	127
Passing	270.1 ypg	3	28
Total	361.2 ypg	12	103
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**ACC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	31.5 ppg	11	90
Rushing	147.7 ypg	5	48
Passing	268.7 ypg	14	120
Total	416.3 ypg	9	80
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**ACC**	**NATIONAL**
-11	-0.92	13	124

2019 RECRUITS

1. Akeem Dent, CB, West Palm Beach, FL
2. Brendan Gant, S, Lakeland, FL
3. Travis Jay, CB, Madison, FL
4. Dontae Lucas, OG, Miami, FL
5. Quashon Fuller, DE, Lehigh Acres, FL
6. Jaleel McRae, LB, New Smyrna Beach, FL
7. Kalen DeLoach, LB, Savannah, GA
8. Raymond Woodie III, S, Tallahassee, FL
9. Curtis Fann, DE, Twin City, GA
10. Maurice Goolsby, WR, Dunnellon, FL
11. Renardo Green, CB, Apopka, FL
12. Derrick McLendon, DE, Tucker, GA
13. Darius Washington, OT, Pensacola, FL
14. Jarvis Brownlee, CB, Opa-locka, FL
15. Tru Thompson, DT, Loganville, GA
16. Kevon Glenn, LB, Hampton, GA
17. Ira Henry, OT, Saint Louis, MO
18. Jay Williams, OT, Moreno Valley, CA*
19. Maurice Smith, OG, Miami, FL
20. Malcolm Ray, DT, Opa-locka, FL
21. Ryan Fitzgerald, K, Moultrie, GA

*junior college transfer

Recruits ranked according to the 247SportsComposite

Harrison McClary

ADVANCED STATS

5 Factors: College Football's Most Important Stats

Field Position[1]		Rank
Offense	26.3	124
Defense	35.6	130
Margin	**-9.3**	**130**
Efficiency[2]		**Rank**
Offense	33.7%	124
Defense	39.2%	39
Margin	**-5.5%**	**106**
Explosiveness[3]		**Rank**
Offense	5.1	110
Defense	5.2	37
Margin	**-0.1**	**83**
Finishing Drives[4]		**Rank**
Offense	4.1	110
Defense	4.2	40
Margin	**-0.1**	**78**
Adjusted TO Margin[5]		**Rank**
Projected	2.2	53
Actual	-11	124
Margin	**-13.2**	**130**

KEY: 1-Average starting field position by yard line; **2**-Rate of successful plays (gaining 50% of necessary yards on 1st down, 70% on 2nd down, 100% on 3rd down); **3**-Explosiveness=yards per play; **4**-Points per trip inside 40-yard line; **5**-TO margin accounting for "luck" • Advanced stats provided by Bill Connelly of SB Nation

NUMBERS TO KNOW

33.7

FSU's offensive success rate (percentage of plays that gained at least 50 percent of necessary yardage on first down, 70 percent on second, or 100 percent on third or fourth) was just 33.7 percent, worst in the ACC and 124th in FBS.

-9.3

What do you get when you combine an inefficient offense with iffy special teams? The worst field position margin in FBS. The Seminoles' average starting field position was 9.3 yards worse than their opponent. They were fighting uphill all year.

-11

Based on national averages for fumble recovery rates and the ratio of interceptions to passes broken up, the Noles' turnover margin should have been about plus-2.2. Instead, it was minus-11. Worst turnovers luck in the country.

the defensive front, and FSU's coaches believe he will emerge as the next great Seminole defensive tackle. The former five-star recruit led FSU's interior linemen with 42 tackles and 3.5 sacks, despite coming off the bench and missing months in the spring and summer with a knee injury.

Florida State's linebacking corps has struggled for several years, but senior Dontavious Jackson leads what could be a major resurgence at the position. Junior Hamsah Nasirildeen, who was the team's leading tackler as a safety in '18, moved to outside linebacker in the spring and appears well suited to that role. FSU's coaches are so enamored with the improved depth and talent at the position that they are looking at switching — at least part-time — from a 4-3 scheme to a 3-4.

There is shuffling in the back end as well, with former starting cornerback Levonta Taylor making the move to safety in spring drills. Junior Stanford Samuels III and sophomore Asante Samuel Jr. settled into the starting cornerback roles late last season, and they'll strive to shore up a secondary that surrendered 30 touchdown passes in 2018, tied for fifth worst in the FBS.

SPECIALISTS After firing special teams coordinator Alonzo Hampton after the season, Taggart asked veteran assistant Mark Snyder to clean up this struggling unit. It will be no small task.

The Seminoles are OK in the kicking department, with seniors Ricky Aguayo and Logan Tyler back at placekicker and punter, respectively. But the coverage units were awful — only six FBS schools allowed more yards per kickoff return — and the return teams weren't much better.

Snyder, who coordinated Michigan State's special teams from 2015-17, has prior experience as a head coach and defensive coordinator on the FBS level. Tops on his list will be eliminating penalties and poor decisions.

FINAL ANALYSIS With improved coaching and chemistry — Taggart has acknowledged that the Seminoles players took longer than he expected to buy in — FSU should put a better product on the field. And that improvement, coupled with a much more manageable schedule, should get the Seminoles back to bowl eligibility. Eight or nine wins aren't out of the question, but even seven victories would be seen as an improvement.

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (6)

WR	**15**	**Tamorrion Terry (So.)**	18	Warren Thompson (Fr.)
WR	29	D.J. Matthews (Jr.)	20	Keyshawn Helton (So.)
WR	**89**	**Keith Gavin (Sr.)**	88	Tre'Shaun Harrison (So.)
LT		Ryan Roberts (Sr.)	73	Jauan Williams (Jr.)
LG	**70**	**Cole Minshew (Sr.)**	59	Brady Scott (So.)
C	51	Baveon Johnson (Jr.)	60	Andrew Boselli (Jr.)
RG	**72**	**Mike Arnold (Jr.)**	55	Dontae Lucas (Fr.)
RT	69	Landon Dickerson (Jr.)	74	Jay Williams (Jr.)
TE	**6**	**Tre' McKitty (Jr.)**	87	Camren McDonald (So.)
QB	1	James Blackman (So.)		Alex Hornibrook (Sr.)
RB	**3**	**Cam Akers (Jr.)**	4	Khalan Laborn (So.)

DEFENSE (8)

Returning Starters in Bold

DE	13	Joshua Kaindoh (Jr.)	59	Xavier Peters (Fr.)
NG	**21**	**Marvin Wilson (Jr.)**	91	Robert Cooper (So.)
DT	16	Cory Durden (So.)	53	Ja'len Parks (So.)
DE	**11**	**Janarius Robinson (Jr.)**	58	Dennis Briggs Jr. (Fr.)
OLB	23	Hamsah Nasirildeen (Jr.)	**28**	**DeCalon Brooks (So.)**
MLB	**5**	**Dontavious Jackson (Sr.)**	22	Adonis Thomas (Sr.)
OLB	56	Emmett Rice (Jr.)	42	Jaleel McRae (Fr.)
CB	**8**	**Stanford Samuels III (Jr.)**	12	A.J. Lytton (So.)
CB	26	Asante Samuel Jr. (So.)	**14**	**Kyle Meyers (Sr.)**
S	**1**	**Levonta Taylor (Sr.)**	29	Isaiah Bolden (Fr.)
S	**6**	**Jaiden Lars-Woodbey (So.)**	24	Cyrus Fagan (Jr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	23	Ricky Aguayo (Sr.)	**KR**	4	Khalan Laborn (So.)
P	21	Logan Tyler (Sr.)	**PR**	29	D.J. Matthews (Jr.)

2018 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Deondre Francois	396	227	2,731	15	12
James Blackman	**51**	**33**	**510**	**5**	**1**

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD
Cam Akers	**161**	**706**	**4.4**	**6**
Jacques Patrick	108	378	3.5	1
Amir Rasul	10	46	4.6	1
Deondre Francois	78	16	0.2	3

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Nyqwan Murray	54	744	13.8	3
D.J. Matthews	**42**	**382**	**9.1**	**1**
Tamorrion Terry	**35**	**744**	**21.3**	**8**
Keith Gavin	**26**	**415**	**16.0**	**1**

KICKING: **Ricky Aguayo, 11-17 FGs, 63 pts.**

TACKLES: **Hamsah Nasirildeen, 91; Dontavious Jackson, 75**

SACKS: Brian Burns, 10.0

INTERCEPTIONS: **Stanford Samuels III, 4**

Returning Players in **Bold**

SCOUTING THE SEMINOLES

OPPOSING COACHES SIZE UP FLORIDA STATE

"That staff was probably too optimistic last year. Willie Taggart got his dream job and all that, but that roster had serious problems. The offense did not work at all under Walt Bell; that was a really bad fit with the players and with Taggart, and now they're banking on Kendal Briles. The upside is that he usually gets successful quick. Look at Houston and FAU — he can put guys in and adjust on the fly. The system won't look that much different than last year, but you have a guy in Kendal who is really going to control all phases. Taggart trusts him; they go way back. … They have to get better on the offensive line. They were handed a short roster, but they also didn't look well coached at all. It killed their run game. … James Blackman is good enough to start, but you have to think Alex Hornibrook didn't transfer for one year not to play. Either one will be an improvement over Deondre Francois. To put it politely, he didn't look 'coachable' at times last year, and they need someone at that position in this season to help them sell their new era. … Defensively, they're strong, especially in the back. They're going to be a lot deeper at linebacker especially. They lose Brian Burns in the pass rush, but they have some scary dudes inside on that line."

Louisville **Cardinals**

National Forecast: **81** • ACC Atlantic Prediction: **7** • Projected Record: **4-8, 2-6 ACC**

Hassan Hall

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Scott Satterfield
Record at School: First Season
Career Record: 51-24 (6 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Dwayne Ledford
Defensive Coordinator: Bryan Brown, Cort Dennison
Location: Louisville, Kentucky
Stadium: Cardinal Stadium (61,000)

KEY CARDINALS

DEZ FITZPATRICK, WR Tough, dependable receiver suffered without Lamar Jackson but led the Cards with three touchdown catches.

C.J. AVERY, LB One of the few Cards who did not surrender on defense, intercepting a pair of passes and scooping a fumble while making 56 tackles.

HASSAN HALL, RB Likely the fastest guy on the team, a quality he showed while burning Clemson for a 93-yard kickoff return for a score.

KEY LOSSES

JAYLEN SMITH, WR Led the Cards with 36 catches for 550 yards, even though his performance was plagued by drops.

DEE SMITH, SS Forced into run-stopping responsibility by an overmatched defensive line, Smith led Louisville with 73 tackles from the secondary.

LUKAYUS MCNEIL, OT Versatile run and pass blocker who started in multiple positions during his career.

RISING STAR

The new staff started late in recruiting, but linebacker **MONTY MONTGOMERY** was a top priority after a terrific season at Hutchinson (Kan.) Community College, where he delivered 78 tackles with 6.5 sacks, three interceptions and three forced fumbles.

The University of Louisville football team lost 10 of 12 games, gave up at least 52 points in each of its last five games and got Bobby Petrino fired with two weeks left in the season. That's all there is to say about 2018.

Scott Satterfield was recruited from his alma mater, Appalachian State, to fix a colossal mess. He didn't have much time to recruit, so Satterfield focused his introductory months on attitude, effort and values. He moved the start of spring practice to early February so that he and his staff could determine precisely how much work there was to do.

Plenty. After being outscored by nearly 25 points per game last season, the Cardinals need dramatic improvement at every position. Quarterback is a mess. Running back is a question mark. The offensive line has been an issue for two seasons. The defense ranked last in the ACC in points and yards allowed.

"It's definitely been a whirlwind," Satterfield says. "We played a lot of guys in places we normally wouldn't [during the spring] because we're just trying to look at certain guys in scenarios to see how they are going to react and then we'll coach through that."

Coach. And coach. And coach, something Satterfield proved he could do in six seasons at Appalachian State.

OFFENSE The Cardinals' offense collapsed without Lamar Jackson at quarterback. A look at Satterfield's record at App State suggests that he prefers a strong running game over Petrino's penchant for passing. Considering that Satterfield's App State quarterback ran 92 times and scored 10 touchdowns, Malik Cunningham, a runner, might have an edge over Jawon Pass. Each has work to do to win the position. Pass is considered the better thrower but completed only 54 percent of his attempts with 12 interceptions. At 6'1" and 190 pounds, Cunningham lacks arm strength, but he averaged 6.3 yards per carry. The two will battle through fall camp with freshman Evan Conley, an early enrollee.

Cunningham was the team's leading rusher, though Hassan Hall emerged as the top halfback. Speed is his primary strength, so Satterfield must create a way to get him outside the tackles.

If Satterfield can fix Pass's deliberate throwing mechanics, receiver will become the Cardinals' offensive strength. Dez Fitzpatrick is a tough, determined receiver who runs crisp routes, but his receiving total dropped from 45 to 31 without Jackson. Seth Dawkins had a similar issue — catching only 25 balls for one touchdown, down from 42 and four in 2017.

The offensive line has lots of work to do. The Cards ranked 13th in the ACC in rushing and allowed 43 sacks, the most in the ACC. Massive offensive tackle Mekhi Becton and center Cole Bentley should emerge as leaders.

DEFENSE If you're a fourth- or fifth-year player on the U of L defense, new coordinator Bryan Brown will be your fourth coordinator in four seasons. After ranking third in the ACC in total defense under Todd Grantham

2019 SCHEDULE

Sept.	2	Notre Dame
Sept.	7	Eastern Kentucky
Sept.	14	vs. Western Kentucky #
Sept.	21	at Florida State
Oct.	5	Boston College
Oct.	12	at Wake Forest
Oct.	19	Clemson
Oct.	26	Virginia
Nov.	9	at Miami
Nov.	16	at NC State
Nov.	23	Syracuse
Nov.	30	at Kentucky

#Nashville

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 2-10, 0-8 ACC

Sept.	1	vs. Alabama #	L	14-51
Sept.	8	Indiana State	W	31-7
Sept.	15	Western Kentucky	W	20-17
Sept.	22	at Virginia	L	3-27
Sept.	29	Florida State	L	24-28
Oct.	5	Georgia Tech	L	31-66
Oct.	13	at Boston College	L	20-38
Oct.	27	Wake Forest	L	35-56
Nov.	3	at Clemson	L	16-77
Nov.	9	at Syracuse	L	23-54
Nov.	17	NC State	L	10-52
Nov.	24	Kentucky	L	10-56

#Orlando

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	ACC	NATIONAL
Scoring	19.8 ppg	14	122
Rushing	141.5 ypg	13	102
Passing	211.1 ypg	11	89
Total	352.6 ypg	14	109
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**ACC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	44.1 ppg	14	128
Rushing	277.3 ypg	14	127
Passing	206.3 ypg	5	40
Total	483.5 ypg	14	122
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**ACC**	**NATIONAL**
-12	-1.00	14	125

2019 RECRUITS

1. Ja'Darien Boykin, DE, Gray, GA
2. Zach Williamson, OT, Huntington, WV
3. Zach Edwards, LB, Starkville, MS
4. Jamel Starks, CB, Decatur, GA
5. Dorian Jones, LB, Fort Lauderdale, FL
6. Aidan Robbins, RB, Louisville, KY
7. Renato Brown, OG, West Palm Beach, FL
8. Allen Smith, OLB, Loganville, GA
9. Jalen Mitchell, RB, Rockledge, FL
10. Dez Melton, TE, Glendale, AZ
11. Joshua Black, OT, Stone Mountain, GA
12. Evan Conley, QB, Marietta, GA
13. Monty Montgomery, LB, Norcross, GA*
14. Jackson Gregory, C, Cleveland, OH

*junior college transfer

Recruits ranked according to the 247SportsComposite

Harrison McClary

ADVANCED STATS

5 Factors: College Football's Most Important Stats

Field Position[1]		Rank
Offense	27.5	112
Defense	32.3	115
Margin	-4.8	117

Efficiency[2]		Rank
Offense	38.9%	102
Defense	51.1%	128
Margin	-12.2%	126

Explosiveness[3]		Rank
Offense	5.3	98
Defense	6.9	124
Margin	-1.6	125

Finishing Drives[4]		Rank
Offense	3.5	126
Defense	5.5	126
Margin	-2.0	130

Adjusted TO Margin[5]		Rank
Projected	-10.2	129
Actual	-12	125
Margin	-1.8	82

KEY: **1**-Average starting field position by yard line; **2**-Rate of successful plays (gaining 50% of necessary yards on 1st down, 70% on 2nd down, 100% on 3rd down); **3**-Explosiveness=yards per play; **4**-Points per trip inside 40-yard line; **5**-TO margin accounting for "luck" • Advanced stats provided by Bill Connelly of SB Nation

NUMBERS TO KNOW

35.0

Louisville's scoring margin regressed by a staggering 35 points per game in 2018, from plus-10.7 in 2017 to minus-24.3. The second-largest regression was UTSA's 23.5 points per game, nearly 12 points back.

-17.5

The Vegas spread never caught up to Louisville's 2018 collapse. The Cardinals underachieved against the spread by an average of 17.5 points per game. In their last five games, they underachieved by 21.8 points per game.

51.1

The defense was horrifying: The Cardinals' defensive success rate (percentage of plays that gained at least 50 percent of necessary yardage on first down, 70 percent on second, or 100 percent on third or fourth) was 51.1 percent, 128th in FBS.

in 2016, the Cards slipped to 10th in 2017 under Peter Sirmon and 14th last season under Brian VanGorder. It was a unit that played without pride, energy or unity, appearing to jog in downfield pursuit on multiple plays during embarrassing losses to Clemson and NC State.

Although as many as 10 starters could return, nobody is guaranteed a spot or playing time. Brown and co-defensive coordinator Cort Dennison embrace the task of coaching toughness and competitiveness into the group. Brown's defense led the Sun Belt last season in fewest yards allowed, but Dennison is also an important addition to the staff because he built a relationship with the players from 2014-17 before working at Oregon one season.

"It was hard to see them at times look like they didn't have the passion that I knew they were capable of having," Dennison says.

Look for linebackers Dorian Etheridge and C.J. Avery to emerge as leaders. Tabarius Peterson showed that he could get to the passer from the edge.

The secondary has potential. Rodjay Burns had games in which he was a reliable coverage guy after transferring from Ohio State. Russ Yeast should deliver a bounce-back season. A four-star recruit, Yeast announced he was leaving before the end of the 2018 season but changed his mind after the coaching change. Safety Khane Pass, Jawon's brother, is a solid, experienced player.

SPECIALISTS Mason King returns for his fourth season as the Cards' punter — and even he had a poor 2018 season as his yards per punt slipped from 43.9 to 40.6. Placekicker Blanton Creque had only 12 field goal opportunities but made 10, although he did miss three extra points.

Burns ranked second in the ACC in average yards per punt return, taking one for a score. Louisville's best special teams play last season was a 93-yard kickoff return for a score by Hall.

FINAL ANALYSIS Satterfield faces a multi-year rebuild of talent and attitude. Lots of work. A program that ranked fifth in the national playoff poll in November 2016 looks primed to miss the bowl scene in back-to-back seasons. There are too many questions at quarterback, running back, offensive line and across the defense. Time to recruit.

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (5)

WR	5	Seth Dawkins (Sr.)	**86**	**Devante Peete (Sr.)**
WR	**7**	**Dez Fitzpatrick (Jr.)**	84	Josh Johnson (So.)
WR	1	Chatarius Atwell (So.)	82	Keion Wakefield (Jr.)
LT	**73**	**Mekhi Becton (Jr.)**	50	Jean-Luc Childs (Jr.)
LG	61	Caleb Chandler (So.)	70	Emmanual Sowders (So.)
C	**66**	**Cole Bentley (Jr.)**	75	Robbie Bell (Jr.)
RG	59	T.J. McCoy (Sr.)	65	Ronald Rudd (Sr.)
RT	60	Tyler Haycraft (Sr.)	63	Zach Williamson (Fr.)
TE	85	Jordan Davis (Sr.)	89	Ean Pfeifer (Sr.)
QB	**4**	**Jawon Pass (Jr.)**	3	Malik Cunningham (So.)
RB	19	Hassan Hall (So.)	10	Javian Hawkins (Fr.)

DEFENSE (9)

Returning Starters in Bold

DE	53	Amonte Caban (Sr.)	**91**	**Derek Dorsey (Jr.)**
NG	**94**	**G.G. Robinson (Sr.)**	**90**	**Jared Goldwire (Jr.)**
DE	92	Malik Clark (So.)	**98**	**Tabarius Peterson (Jr.)**
LB	49	Boosie Whitlow (Sr.)	93	Gary McRae (Sr.)
LB	**9**	**C.J. Avery (Jr.)**	43	Damien Smith (Sr.)
LB	**17**	**Dorian Etheridge (Jr.)**		T.J. Holl (Sr.)
LB	**10**	**Rodjay Burns (Jr.)**	15	Quen Head (Jr.)
CB	**3**	**Cornelius Sturghill (Sr.)**	2	Chandler Jones (So.)
CB	12	Marlon Character (Jr.)	1	P.J. Mbanasor (Sr.)
SS	6	Russ Yeast (Jr.)	20	Trenell Troutman (So.)
FS	**30**	**Khane Pass (Sr.)**	4	TreSean Smith (Jr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	45	Blanton Creque (Sr.)	**KR**	19	Hassan Hall (So.)
P	28	Mason King (Sr.)	**PR**	10	Rodjay Burns (Jr.)

2018 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Jawon Pass	**300**	**162**	**1,960**	**8**	**12**
Malik Cunningham	**67**	**40**	**473**	**1**	**1**

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD
Malik Cunningham	**79**	**497**	**6.3**	**5**
Hassan Hall	**70**	**303**	**4.3**	**3**
Trey Smith	50	263	5.3	4
Jeremy Smith	45	229	5.1	0

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Jaylen Smith	36	550	15.3	1
Dez Fitzpatrick	**31**	**422**	**13.6**	**3**
Chatarius Atwell	**24**	**406**	**16.9**	**2**
Seth Dawkins	**25**	**329**	**13.2**	**1**

KICKING: **Blanton Creque, 10-12 FGs, 57 pts.**
TACKLES: Dee Smith, 73; **C.J. Avery, 56**
SACKS: 4 players tied with 2.0
INTERCEPTIONS: **C.J. Avery, 2**

Returning Players in **Bold**

SCOUTING THE CARDINALS

OPPOSING COACHES SIZE UP LOUISVILLE

"This is a total rebuild. This one might be more difficult than Georgia Tech switching back from a triple (option). The good news is that Louisville seems completely aware that this is a ground-up situation and not a quick fix. They obviously really wanted Jeff Brohm, being the native son and all, but they got a 10-year guy in Scott (Satterfield). He's going to take the time we think they're giving him and build out his program. App State was a really, really well-run program. They found their guys, built them up and dominated with their culture. It's a long road to doing that here. … The worst of it might not even be done yet. Bobby Petrino leaving a program hits you in waves; first they quit on him, then you have to run off a bunch of them. They'll probably have guys leave over the course of the summer and fall. … Expect a total change with the offensive personnel. The QB they got from this signing class (Evan Conley) will probably end up as their guy, maybe not at first but maybe by the end of the year. They're going to take their lumps with him now, which makes sense. … Kentucky has been beating them for some guys they never would have when Charlie Strong was there. They need to reinvest in recruiting their part of the state and lock in on Florida and those other places."

NC State **Wolfpack**

National Forecast: **38** • ACC Atlantic Prediction: **4** • Projected Record: **7-5, 4-4 ACC**

Ricky Person Jr.

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Dave Doeren
Record at School: 43-34 (6 years)
Career Record: 66-38 (8 years)
Offensive Coordinators: Des Kitchings, George McDonald
Defensive Coordinators: Tony Gibson, Dave Huxtable
Location: Raleigh, NC
Stadium: Carter-Finley Stadium (57,583)

KEY WOLFPACK

EMEKA EMEZIE, WR Poised for a breakout season after steady production (53 catches, 616 yards) as a secondary option.

JAMES SMITH-WILLIAMS, DE Senior leader on the defensive line; tied for the team lead with six sacks.

CHRIS DUNN, PK Solved NC State's kicking woes with a stellar freshman season (23-of-26 on field goals).

KEY LOSSES

KELVIN HARMON, WR First NC State receiver since Jerricho Cotchery to post back-to-back 1,000-yard seasons. He will be difficult to replace.

RYAN FINLEY, QB Transfer from Boise State and three-year starter for the Pack threw for 10,501 yards and 60 touchdowns.

GERMAINE PRATT, LB All-ACC linebacker led the Wolfpack in tackles (104), tackles for a loss (10.5) and tied for sacks (6.0)

RISING STAR

The Wolfpack are hoping lightning will strike twice. Nyheim Hines was a highly touted local product who turned into an All-ACC running back. Freshman **BAM KNIGHT** is in the same mold. "He gives us what we had when Nyheim was here in the backfield," coach Dave Doeren says.

NC State will have a new play caller, new quarterback, new primary running back, new starting receivers and three new starters on the offensive line. That's a lot of "new."

After consecutive nine-win seasons, it's going to be a rebuilding year for coach Dave Doeren. NC State relied on a lot of NFL talent to win 11 ACC games the past two years (second only to Clemson in that span).

Doeren, entering Year 7, has done well on the recruiting trail to reload, but it's going to take some time for the new parts to get up to speed. Not that Doeren is looking to grade the season on a curve.

"The national champion just won it with a true freshman quarterback," Doeren says. "So for any of us to put boxes on how good we can be at this point is premature. There are lot of unknowns right now, and that's the part that is exciting and unsettling."

OFFENSE The Wolfpack relied on their offense last year. The passing of quarterback Ryan Finley and the playmaking of receivers Kelvin Harmon and Jakobi Meyers were the main reasons they went 9–4.

But just about all of the featured parts of the offense are gone, even offensive coordinator Eli Drinkwitz (now the head coach at Appalachian State). Assistants Des Kitchings and George McDonald, as co-coordinators, will take over the play-calling duties, but it will still be "our offense," Doeren says. That means a spread passing game and lot of zone stretch runs.

Matthew McKay, a third-year sophomore, finished spring with the inside track to replace Finley. McKay's strength is his mobility. He attempted only eight passes last year, but he ran 13 times for 36 yards and a touchdown in five games. Freshman Devin Leary and sophomore Bailey Hockman, who began his career at Florida State, will have a chance to win the job in training camp.

The new starter at quarterback will have plenty of capable targets. Junior Emeka Emezie is poised to have a big season. He caught 53 passes for 616 yards with five touchdowns last season as Harmon's apprentice. Sophomore Thayer Thomas slides into Meyers' role in the slot after a strong freshman campaign (34 catches).

After producing three different 1,000-yard running backs in the past three years, the ground game has to be retooled. Sophomore Ricky Person Jr. (471 yards) was a good change-of-pace back last season but will have to do more of the heavy lifting without Reggie Gallaspy. There are durability questions with Person and not a lot of experienced depth behind him. Freshman Bam Knight was the star of the spring game and looks like he could be a game-changer with his speed.

More of an issue than finding runners is rebuilding the offensive line. New O-line coach John Garrison will have his work cut out for him with three new starters.

DEFENSE NC State lost its starting defensive line to the NFL Draft last spring, and it showed during the 2018 season. The Wolfpack ranked No. 108 in the country in

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	East Carolina
Sept.	7	Western Carolina
Sept.	14	at West Virginia
Sept.	21	Ball State
Sept.	28	at Florida State
Oct.	10	Syracuse
Oct.	19	at Boston College
Nov.	2	at Wake Forest
Nov.	9	Clemson
Nov.	16	Louisville
Nov.	21	at Georgia Tech
Nov.	30	North Carolina

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 9-4, 5-3 ACC

Sept.	1	James Madison	W	24-13
Sept.	8	Georgia State	W	41-7
Sept.	22	at Marshall	W	37-20
Sept.	29	Virginia	W	35-21
Oct.	6	Boston College	W	28-23
Oct.	20	at Clemson	L	7-41
Oct.	27	at Syracuse	L	41-51
Nov.	3	Florida State	W	47-28
Nov.	8	Wake Forest	L	23-27
Nov.	17	at Louisville	W	52-10
Nov.	24	at North Carolina (ot)	W	34-28
Dec.	1	East Carolina	W	58-3
Dec.	31	vs. Texas A&M #	L	13-52

#Gator Bowl

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	ACC	NATIONAL
Scoring	33.8 ppg	3	31
Rushing	142.9 ypg	12	101
Passing	313.2 ypg	1	8
Total	456.1 ypg	3	26
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**ACC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	24.9 ppg	4	45
Rushing	131.5 ypg	2	29
Passing	261.1 ypg	11	108
Total	392.6 ypg	6	66
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**ACC**	**NATIONAL**
+1	+0.08	8	57

2019 RECRUITS

1. Savion Jackson, DE, Clayton, NC
2. C.J. Clark, DT, New London, NC
3. Joshua Harris, DT, Roxboro, NC
4. Bam Knight, RB, Bailey, NC
5. Shyheim Battle, CB, Rocky Mount, NC
6. Ty Evans, QB, Colorado Springs, CO
7. Khalid Martin, S, Tobaccoville, NC
8. Drake Thomas, LB, Wake Forest, NC
9. Ikem Ekwonu, OG, Charlotte, NC
10. Bailey Hockman, QB, Powder Springs, GA*
11. Terrell Dawkins, DE, Concord, NC
12. Jordan Houston, RB, Waldorf, MD
13. Timothy McKay, OG, Raleigh, NC
14. Jaylon Scott, LB, Shelby, NC
15. Dylan McMahon, C, Savannah, GA
16. Jalen Frazier, CB, Cornelius, NC
17. Chris Toudle, WR, Wilmington, NC
18. Cecil Powell, S, Fort Lauderdale, FL
19. Keyon Lesane, WR, Lumberton, NC
20. Kam Walker, TE, Canton, NC
21. Jakeen Harris, S, Savannah, GA
22. Zovon Lindsay, OT, Fayetteville, NC
23. Delbert Mimms, RB, Indianapolis, IN
24. Joe Shimko, LS, Belmar, NJ

*junior college transfer

Recruits ranked according to the 247SportsComposite

Walter G. Arce Sr.

ADVANCED STATS

5 Factors: College Football's Most Important Stats

Field Position[1]		Rank
Offense	31.3	32
Defense	27.3	17
Margin	**+4.0**	**25**

Efficiency[2]		Rank
Offense	46.7%	20
Defense	40.9%	62
Margin	**+5.8%**	**29**

Explosiveness[3]		Rank
Offense	6.1	43
Defense	5.9	87
Margin	**+0.2**	**73**

Finishing Drives[4]		Rank
Offense	4.7	57
Defense	4.3	43
Margin	**+0.4**	**40**

Adjusted TO Margin[5]		Rank
Projected	1.4	55
Actual	1	57
Margin	**-0.4**	**68**

KEY: 1-Average starting field position by yard line; **2**-Rate of successful plays (gaining 50% of necessary yards on 1st down, 70% on 2nd down, 100% on 3rd down); **3**-Explosiveness=yards per play; **4**-Points per trip inside 40-yard line; **5**-TO margin accounting for "luck" • Advanced stats provided by Bill Connelly of SB Nation

NUMBERS TO KNOW

39

The Wolfpack ground attack was awfully stagnant in 2018: NC State gained at least 4.0 yards on just 39 percent of its non-sack rushes (128th in FBS). The Pack also got stuffed at or behind the line 23 percent of the time (112th).

81

With the rushing problems, it isn't a surprise that NC State was mediocre on third downs. Ryan Finley's passer rating ranked 60th in FBS on first down, 36th on second and only 81st on third.

10.8

Despite losing an incredible four defensive linemen to the 2018 NFL Draft, State's havoc rate (TFLs, passes defensed and forced fumbles divided by total plays) in the front seven fell by just 0.5 percentage points, from 11.3 percent to 10.8.

pass defense. With a new group of pass rushers, they struggled to pressure the quarterback, and the secondary couldn't hold up.

Clemson (380 passing yards) and Syracuse (480 yards) ripped up NC State's defense in a season-turning two-week stretch. The challenge for the Pack is to improve on defense with many of the same parts.

NC State returns eight defensive starters, including five in the secondary. Senior end James Smith-Williams tied for the team lead with six sacks and will be relied on to lead the front four.

There is a wave of talent coming up front, with sophomore tackle Alim McNeill and true freshmen Joshua Harris (tackle) and Savion Jackson (end) ready for primary roles. It's going to take a year, or two, for that group to match the production of the NFL quartet from 2017.

Doeren has restocked the linebacker positions with highly rated in-state recruits. Payton Wilson and Drake Thomas are young but have a bright future.

Senior safety Jarius Morehead is the standout in the secondary. He is top returning tackler (81), and he led the team with three interceptions. The corners need to improve and make plays without committing penalties. The health of safety Stephen Griffin, who was limited to six starts last year, will be a key to the secondary's improvement.

SPECIALISTS Chris Dunn proved to be the answer at placekicker and figures to stay that way for another three years. As a freshman, Dunn made his final 15 field goal attempts. The return game struggled to make a difference. Thayer Thomas had some moments on punt returns, but the big plays on kick returns were few and far between after previously being a strength for the Wolfpack.

FINAL ANALYSIS After losing 13 players to the NFL Draft in a two-year period, NC State has to reload. The schedule is favorable enough to make a bowl game, but the ceiling isn't much higher than six or seven regular-season wins.

The question for Doeren will be: What is the basement? If it's five wins with the promise of higher yields in 2020 and '21, that's a deal most of the fan base will accept.

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (4)

WR	3	**Emeka Emezie (Jr.)**	84	Jasiah Provillon (Fr.)
WR	87	Thayer Thomas (So.)	4	Tabari Hines (Sr.)
WR	19	C.J. Riley (Jr.)	88	Devin Carter (Fr.)
LT	55	Tyrone Riley (Sr.)	74	Emanuel McGirt Jr. (Sr.)
LG	71	Joe Sculthorpe (Jr.)	62	Bryson Speas (So.)
C	50	Grant Gibson (So.)	59	Liam Ryan (So.)
RG	**66**	**Josh Fedd-Jackson (Jr.)**	68	Charles Fletcher (So.)
RT	**67**	**Justin Witt (Jr.)**	52	Kendall Brown (Jr.)
TE	**42**	**Dylan Autenrieth (Jr.)**	6	Cary Angeline (Jr.)
QB	7	Matthew McKay (So.)	13	Devin Leary (Fr.)
RB	8	Ricky Person Jr. (So.)	24	Bam Knight (Fr.)

DEFENSE (8)

Returning Starters in Bold

DE	**39**	**James Smith-Williams (Sr.)**	97	Xavier Lyas (So.)
DT	29	Alim McNeill (So.)	56	Val Martin (Jr.)
DT	**92**	**Larrell Murchison (Sr.)**	44	Joshua Harris (Fr.)
DE	55	Deonte Holden (Sr.)	90	Savion Jackson (Fr.)
LB	**41**	**Isaiah Moore (So.)**	2	Louis Acceus (Jr.)
LB	12	Brock Miller (Jr.)	11	Payton Wilson (Fr.)
CB	**4**	**Nick McCloud (Sr.)**	28	Kishawn Miller (Sr.)
CB	8	Teshaun Smith (So.)	**7**	**Chris Ingram (Jr.)**
S	**21**	**Stephen Griffin (Sr.)**	32	Tyler Baker-Williams (So.)
S	**31**	**Jarius Morehead (Sr.)**	22	Isaiah Stallings (Jr.)
S	34	Tim Kidd-Glass (Sr.)	**10**	**Tanner Ingle (So.)**

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	32	Chris Dunn (So.)	KR	4	Tabari Hines (Sr.)
P	98	Mackenzie Morgan (So.)	PR	87	Thayer Thomas (So.)

2018 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Ryan Finley	484	326	3,928	25	11
Matthew McKay	**8**	**7**	**87**	**0**	**0**

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD
Reggie Gallaspy	228	1,091	4.8	18
Ricky Person Jr.	**112**	**471**	**4.2**	**2**
Brady Bodine	28	128	4.6	3
Trent Pennix	**22**	**68**	**3.1**	**0**

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Jakobi Meyers	92	1,047	11.4	4
Kelvin Harmon	81	1,186	14.6	7
Emeka Emezie	**53**	**616**	**11.6**	**5**
Thayer Thomas	**34**	**383**	**11.3**	**3**

KICKING: **Chris Dunn, 23-26 FGs, 120 pts.**

TACKLES: Germaine Pratt, 104; **Jarius Morehead, 81**

SACKS: Germaine Pratt, 6.0; **James Smith-Williams, 6.0**

INTERCEPTIONS: **Jarius Morehead, 3**

Returning Players in **Bold**

SCOUTING THE WOLFPACK

OPPOSING COACHES SIZE UP NC STATE

"That's a program that really doesn't get enough credit for their player development. They're turning out NFL talent at a clip they have no business achieving. It's nuts. … Obviously quarterback Ryan Finley is gone, but so is most of that offensive coaching staff. They could look significantly different this fall. They have to rebuild their offensive line and find a new top receiver. The co-offensive coordinators thing is always a gamble, especially coming off of a really good play caller in Eli Drinkwitz. … The young running back (Bam Knight) is pretty electric; we've seen some tape on him and he's impressive. We don't think they're going to name a quarterback until late in the summer. It's three guys and none of them have shown a lot of separation. … They're always a nine-win team with NFL talent, but they're never quite there with a Clemson or Florida State in terms of top-level depth. And for whatever reason, they've really struggled to be consistent and nail down that big year that can redefine your message in recruiting. They're always really close. … You don't want to play at their place. Does Raleigh get a lot of attention for its crowd? It really should. That place is hell when you're coming in on a Thursday night. It's one of the loudest stadiums in our league."

Syracuse **Orange**

National Forecast: **21** • ACC Atlantic Prediction: **2** • Projected Record: **9-3, 5-3 ACC**

Moe Neal

When Dino Babers arrived in central New York in December 2015, he envisioned building a national contender. With Syracuse coming off its first 10-win season since 2001 and highest AP ranking since 1998, that doesn't sound quite so crazy. The Orange have built up their talent and depth in most positions heading into Year 4 of the Babers era. Now, SU is gearing up for its most manageable schedule since joining the ACC in 2013.

A Week 3 matchup with Clemson — an opponent that SU has played to the wire each of the last two years (one win, one loss) — looms as a game with ACC championship and College Football Playoff implications. Win that game, one that could bring College GameDay to Syracuse for the first time ever, and nothing is off the table.

Of course, there are questions. How will the Orange replace two starting linebackers and three offensive linemen? Is sophomore quarterback Tommy DeVito ready to step in and lead the offense? Can SU win on the road against Florida State and NC State?

OFFENSE With a shift at QB from the playmaking Eric Dungey to the pocket-passing DeVito, Babers and offensive coordinator Mike Lynch have big-picture decisions to make about their offense.

Syracuse is expected to install more screens for its deep cast of running backs, led by senior Moe Neal and junior Abdul Adams, as well as check-down opportunities to keep defenses from getting after DeVito.

A traditional run game would be the best way to unlock DeVito's downfield passing. A group that leaned on Dungey's legs now must find other means for success.

The Orange graduate both starting tackles in Cody Conway and Koda Martin, as well as left guard Aaron Roberts. In their place, look for South Alabama graduate transfer Ryan Alexander to start at tackle while sophomore Dakota Davis could step in at a guard spot.

If the offensive line can mesh, the backs appear capable of making consistent gains. Neal averaged 5.6 yards per carry last year while Adams, a transfer from Oklahoma, logged two touchdowns in his SU debut during the Camping World Bowl. Adams averaged 9.2 yards as a sophomore at OU.

DeVito's most proven targets in the passing game are slot receivers Sean Riley and Nykeim Johnson. The former is a three-year contributor and standout return man, while the latter flashed his big-play ability with three touchdowns of at least 40 yards.

Trishton Jackson, who transferred from Michigan State at the same time as Adams last spring, is a candidate to break out. Sophomore Taj Harris is a rising threat at outside receiver.

DEFENSE Syracuse made significant progress on defense last season, reducing its yards per play allowed from 6.4 to 5.8 and its points allowed from 32.2 to 27.0.

The Orange are loaded on the line with senior edge rushers Alton Robinson and Kendall Coleman ready to

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Dino Babers
Record at School: 18-19 (3 years)
Career Record: 55-35 (7 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Mike Lynch
Defensive Coordinator: Brian Ward
Location: Syracuse, NY
Stadium: Carrier Dome (49,262)

KEY ORANGE

TOMMY DEVITO, QB DeVito came on to lead the Orange to victories against Florida State and North Carolina.

ALTON ROBINSON, DE Perhaps the most explosive SU athlete since Chandler Jones, Robinson figures to shoot up draft boards next fall.

CHRIS FREDRICK, CB A reliable cover corner who has started 31 straight games, Fredrick returns with two years of solid experience matching up against No. 1 ACC wideouts.

KEY LOSSES

ERIC DUNGEY, QB A four-year starter and emotional leader of the program.

CHRIS SLAYTON, DT An underappreciated space filler at the head of SU's defense, Slayton was the epitome of a guy who outperformed the stat sheet.

JAMAL CUSTIS, WR Custis broke out in his senior season, providing a reliable No. 1 option on the outside in the Orange's hurry-up offense.

RISING STAR

Syracuse battled with Miami last cycle for **CORNELIUS NUNN**, an uber-athletic playmaker in the secondary. He committed to SU, flipped to Miami and then flipped back to the Orange. This summer, Nunn will look to find a role in Syracuse's packed defensive backs room.

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	at Liberty
Sept.	7	at Maryland
Sept.	14	Clemson
Sept.	21	Western Michigan
Sept.	28	Holy Cross
Oct.	10	at NC State
Oct.	18	Pittsburgh
Oct.	26	at Florida State
Nov.	2	Boston College
Nov.	16	at Duke
Nov.	23	at Louisville
Nov.	30	Wake Forest

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 10-3, 6-2 ACC

Aug.	31	at Western Michigan	W	55-42
Sept.	8	Wagner	W	62-10
Sept.	15	Florida State	W	30-7
Sept.	22	Connecticut	W	51-21
Sept.	29	at Clemson	L	23-27
Oct.	6	at Pittsburgh (ot)	L	37-44
Oct.	20	North Carolina (ot)	W	40-37
Oct.	27	NC State	W	51-41
Nov.	3	at Wake Forest	W	41-24
Nov.	9	Louisville	W	54-23
Nov.	17	vs. Notre Dame #	L	3-36
Nov.	24	at Boston College	W	42-21
Dec.	28	vs. West Virginia %	W	34-18

#Bronx, NY %Camping World Bowl

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	ACC	NATIONAL
Scoring	40.2 ppg	2	11
Rushing	200.1 ypg	5	36
Passing	264.7 ypg	4	31
Total	464.8 ypg	2	19
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**ACC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	27.0 ppg	6	64
Rushing	162.5 ypg	8	63
Passing	264.1 ypg	12	116
Total	426.5 ypg	10	88
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**ACC**	**NATIONAL**
+13	+1.00	1	5

2019 RECRUITS

1. Lee Kpogba, LB, Winston-Salem, NC
2. Mikel Jones, LB, Hialeah, FL
3. Cornelius Nunn, S, Miami, FL
4. Geoff Cantin, OLB, Quebec City, QC
5. Jawhar Jordan, RB, Long Island, NY
6. Jason Munoz, DE, Hollywood, FL
7. Steven Linton, DE, Dublin, GA
8. Cooper Dawson, DL, Charleston, SC
9. Matthew Bergeron, OT, Quebec City, QC
10. David Summers, QB, Fairfield, CT
11. Aman Greenwood, S, Washington, DC
12. Courtney Jackson, WR, Monroeville, PA
13. Garrison Johnson, RB, Manvel, TX
14. Joe Rondi, DT, Wayne, NJ
15. Andrew Tuazama, DE, Knightdale, NC
16. Darius Tisdale, OT, South Brunswick, NJ*
17. Garrett Williams, CB, Harrisburg, NC
18. Anthony Red, OG, Bloomfield, CT
19. Luke Benson, TE, Doylestown, PA
20. Adrian Cole, CB, Fort Lauderdale, FL
21. Ishmael Goulbourne, DE, Palm Beach Gardens, FL

*junior college transfer

Recruits ranked according to the 247SportsComposite

Tom DiPace

ADVANCED STATS

5 Factors: College Football's Most Important Stats

Field Position[1]		Rank
Offense	35.0	2
Defense	27.4	21
Margin	+7.6	2

Efficiency[2]		Rank
Offense	43.9%	41
Defense	38.6%	35
Margin	+5.3%	33

Explosiveness[3]		Rank
Offense	5.7	67
Defense	5.8	77
Margin	-0.1	84

Finishing Drives[4]		Rank
Offense	4.7	61
Defense	4.0	26
Margin	+0.7	24

Adjusted TO Margin[5]		Rank
Projected	5.5	24
Actual	13	5
Margin	+7.5	11

KEY: 1-Average starting field position by yard line; **2**-Rate of successful plays (gaining 50% of necessary yards on 1st down, 70% on 2nd down, 100% on 3rd down); **3**-Explosiveness=yards per play; **4**-Points per trip inside 40-yard line; **5**-TO margin accounting for "luck" • Advanced stats provided by Bill Connelly of SB Nation

NUMBERS TO KNOW

18.0

Syracuse's average scoring margin improved by 18 points per game in 2018 — the largest improvement in the ACC and sixth largest in FBS — from minus-4.8 in 2017 to plus-13.2. A majority of that improvement took place on offense, where the Orange improved by 12.8 points per game.

7.6

Special teams helped the Orange tilt the field. Syracuse's field position margin was plus-7.6 yards per drive (35.0 on offense, 27.4 on defense), best in the ACC and second best in FBS.

12.5

In 2017-18, Eric Dungey averaged 12.5 non-sack carries and 6.1 yards per carry. Either the running backs will have to carry more of a load in his absence, or Syracuse will be throwing a lot more this fall.

build off double-digit-sack seasons. Junior Josh Black has shifted to nose tackle and will look to fill the enormous shoes of Chris Slayton, who demanded double-teams last fall.

SU's secondary features experienced contributors such as corner Chris Fredrick and strong safety Evan Foster, both seniors, as well as standout second-year guys like nickel/corner Trill Williams and free safety Andre Cisco. Cisco tied for the national lead in interceptions (seven) a year ago en route to earning All-America honors and being named ACC Defensive Rookie of the Year.

The linebacking unit, once again, faces uncertainty. Last year, the Orange leaned hard on seniors Ryan Guthrie and Kielan Whitner, who worked through some struggles to become reliable cogs in the defense. In 2019, Syracuse has experienced options such as Lakiem Williams and Andrew Armstrong. The Orange also have talented underclassmen in Juan Wallace, Mikel Jones and Lee Kpogba.

How defensive coordinator Brian Ward handles the competition during preseason camp will be a major storyline.

SPECIALISTS Syracuse featured arguably the nation's best special teams a year ago, led by Andre Szmyt and Sterling Hofrichter. Both are back for 2019. Szmyt went from a walk-on redshirt freshman to a unanimous All-American and Lou Groza Award winner last season. He made 30-of-34 field goals, including all three of his attempts from 50-plus yards. Hofrichter, now a senior, was an All-ACC selection and one of the top punters in the nation. His gross punting average (42.9) was second in the ACC while SU's net punting average (39.1) led the conference for the second year in a row. Riley is back as the primary return man.

FINAL ANALYSIS Within the Syracuse program, it's clear that the stakes have risen.

Syracuse wants to compete for an ACC championship. It wants to compete for a spot in the College Football Playoff. The big question: Can the Orange beat Clemson? SU shocked the Tigers in the Carrier Dome two years ago and lost a heartbreaker at Death Valley last fall. The Tigers return to Syracuse on Sept. 14 in what figures to be one of the pivotal games on the ACC slate this season.

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (6)

WR	10	**Sean Riley (Sr.)**	14	Anthony Queeley (Fr.)
WR	82	**Nykeim Johnson (Jr.)**	80	**Taj Harris (So.)**
WR	86	Trishton Jackson (Jr.)	81	Cameron Jordan (So.)
LT		Ryan Alexander (Sr.)	52	Carlos Vettorello (Fr.)
LG	57	Dakota Davis (So.)	76	Qadir White (Fr.)
C	75	Sam Heckel (Jr.)	72	Andrejas Duerig (Sr.)
RG	63	**Evan Adams (Sr.)**	69	Patrick Davis (Jr.)
RT	68	**Airon Servais (Jr.)**	77	Mike Clark (Jr.)
TE	36	Chris Elmore (Jr.)	89	Aaron Hackett (Jr.)
QB	13	Tommy DeVito (So.)	11	Clayton Welch (Sr.)
RB	21	**Moe Neal (Sr.)**	23	Abdul Adams (Jr.)

DEFENSE (7)

Returning Starters in Bold

DE	94	**Alton Robinson (Sr.)**	57	Kingsley Jonathan (Jr.)
DT	98	**McKinley Williams (Sr.)**	45	Kenneth Ruff (Sr.)
NT	85	Josh Black (Jr.)	51	Shaq Grosvenor (Sr.)
DE	55	**Kendall Coleman (Sr.)**	97	Brandon Berry (Sr.)
ILB	12	Andrew Armstrong (Sr.)	42	Tyrell Richards (So.)
ILB	46	Lakiem Williams (Sr.)	30	Juan Wallace (So.)
NB	21	Trill Williams (So.)	32	Allen Stritzinger (Jr.)
CB	3	**Chris Fredrick (Sr.)**	23	Ifeatu Melifonwu (So.)
CB	18	**Scoop Bradshaw (Sr.)**	16	Carl Jones (Sr.)
FS	19	**Andre Cisco (So.)**	11	Devon Clarke (Jr.)
SS	14	**Evan Foster (Sr.)**		Cornelius Nunn (Fr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	91	Andre Szmyt (So.)	KR	10	Sean Riley (Sr.)
P	10	Sterling Hofrichter (Sr.)	PR	10	Sean Riley (Sr.)

2018 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Eric Dungey	371	226	2,868	18	9
Tommy DeVito	**87**	**44**	**525**	**4**	**3**

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD
Moe Neal	**155**	**869**	**5.6**	**5**
Eric Dungey	184	754	4.1	15
Dontae Strickland	121	599	5.0	6
Jarveon Howard	**68**	**315**	**4.6**	**7**

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Jamal Custis	51	906	17.8	6
Sean Riley	**64**	**756**	**11.8**	**3**
Nykeim Johnson	**41**	**565**	**13.8**	**4**
Taj Harris	**40**	**565**	**14.1**	**3**

KICKING: **Andre Szmyt, 30-34 FGs, 151 pts.**

TACKLES: Ryan Guthrie, 107; Kielan Whitner, 100

SACKS: **Kendall Coleman, 10.0; Alton Robinson, 10.0**

INTERCEPTIONS: **Andre Cisco, 7**

Returning Players in **Bold**

SCOUTING THE ORANGE

OPPOSING COACHES SIZE UP SYRACUSE

"Dino Babers has had a remarkable run with a roster that's had a lot of experience. He's done a great job, but he's had a team full of older kids. He's had that quarterback (Eric Dungey) ever since he's been there, and this past season all of that came to fruition. Now because of their talent base and what you can really do in recruiting there, there's a big question around if he can keep it going, if he can keep winning and keep attention on the program with the less experienced side of that roster. It's going to be hard. … The interesting thing about an Art Briles offensive system is that it's built almost exclusively on the talent level and the awareness of your quarterback. The other skill position experience doesn't dictate anything. What are they going to look like now? Tommy DeVito is the guy there; they lost the other kid (Chance Amie) to the transfer portal along with their best receiver. Just based on experience, we think they're going to fall back and look as young as they are on offense. … Defensively they're built to suit their offense, which is sort of saying that they're not really extra talented at any one place and they want to take risks and get the ball back to their QBs. Just like with the offense, they had a lot of veterans last year so they could do more. Let's see how multiple they can get with new personnel they've been recruiting."

Wake Forest **Demon Deacons**

National Forecast: **60** • ACC Atlantic Prediction: **5** • Projected Record: **7-5, 3-5 ACC**

Cade Carney

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Dave Clawson
Record at School: 28-35 (5 years)
Career Record: 118-115 (19 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Warren Ruggiero
Defensive Coordinator: Lyle Hemphill
Location: Winston-Salem, NC
Stadium: BB&T Field (31,500)

KEY DEMON DEACONS

CADE CARNEY, RB Powerful back ran for 1,005 yards (most in a season for Wake Forest since 2005) and eight touchdowns last season.

JUSTIN STRNAD, LB He had a team-high 105 tackles, including 8.5 for a loss, but is versatile enough to play the pass as well.

ESSANG BASSEY, CB Second-team All-ACC selection tied for 16th in the country with 16 passes defended and is now tied for No. 3 in ACC history.

KEY LOSSES

MATT COLBURN, RB Ran for 2,528 career yards and 15 scores in his career and was an important locker room presence.

GREG DORTCH, WR/KR Early NFL entry had 1,078 receiving yards last year (No. 2 in school history); scored 19 TDs in 20 career games.

CAMERON GLENN, DB He posted 98 tackles each of the last two seasons and was named second-team All-ACC last season.

RISING STAR

Dave Clawson hasn't fielded a running back with breakaway speed in his tenure, but **CHRISTIAN BEAL-SMITH** is looking to change that. The sophomore ripped off runs of 52 and 42 yards in limited time last season. He'll also return kicks and was a receiving threat in high school.

Dave Clawson has solidified his reputation as a program rebuilder, coaching Wake Forest to three straight bowl wins for the first time in school history. He'd just like this season to be a little less stressful than last season was.

In 2018, Clawson started a true freshman quarterback and fired his defensive coordinator after four games. Despite losing his quarterback to injury, Clawson saw his team win two of its last three to become bowl eligible. Then the Deacons rallied from 18 down and survived a missed field goal on the final play to win the Birmingham Bowl.

Clawson's offense has led the turnaround: The past two seasons have been the top two in program history for scoring and total offense. Clawson survived the loss of quarterback John Wolford after 2017, but this year he loses big-play receiver Greg Dortch, who left early for the NFL, and the core of his offensive line.

Clawson — whose 2019 recruiting class included three of the top five highest-rated prospects in school history — isn't as worried about replacing that talent as he would have been a few years ago: "We're not winning by accident here. We have good players."

OFFENSE There's a possible quarterback controversy brewing. Sam Hartman returns after breaking his leg in the ninth game, and Jamie Newman won three of his four starts in relief. Newman, a junior, may open with a slight edge. He completed nearly 60 percent of his passes and threw an excellent deep ball. He also added more of a running threat than Hartman and, at 6'4", 235 pounds, showed he could take a pounding. But Hartman was fourth in the ACC in total offense when he went down, so Clawson is facing a difficult decision.

The offense loses Dortch, who was a threat to score at any time, but it returns leading rusher Cade Carney and Sage Surratt, who caught 41 passes as a redshirt freshman. Wake Forest will add Christian Beal-Smith's speed to the backfield and hope for Scotty Washington, who caught 45 passes as a sophomore, to get fully healthy.

Kendall Hinton will try to turn the elusiveness he showed at quarterback into a solution in the slot. Hinton was in line to start at QB last season before an off-field incident derailed him, and he eventually converted to receiver but caught only six passes. Also look out for four-star early enrollee Nolan Groulx.

The line loses three players who made 112 combined starts. "Right now, the offensive line is sort of a puzzle," Clawson says. The Deacons should be strong at tackle, where they return two-year starter Jake Benzinger and three-year starter Justin Herron, who was lost for the season due to a knee injury in the first game. Tight end Jack Freudenthal is a strong blocker but needs to improve as a receiving threat.

DEFENSE Since former coordinator Mike Elko left after the 2016 season, the defense has struggled. Clawson fired Jay Sawvel after four games last season, but play didn't improve much: Wake Forest gave up more

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	30	Utah State
Sept.	6	at Rice
Sept.	12	North Carolina
Sept.	21	Elon
Sept.	28	at Boston College
Oct.	12	Louisville
Oct.	19	Florida State
Nov.	2	NC State
Nov.	9	at Virginia Tech
Nov.	16	at Clemson
Nov.	23	Duke
Nov.	30	at Syracuse

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 7-6, 3-5 ACC

Aug.	30	at Tulane	(ot)	W	23-17
Sept.	8	Towson		W	51-20
Sept.	13	Boston College		L	34-41
Sept.	22	Notre Dame		L	27-56
Sept.	29	Rice		W	56-24
Oct.	6	Clemson		L	3-63
Oct.	20	at Florida State		L	17-38
Oct.	27	at Louisville		W	56-35
Nov.	3	Syracuse		L	24-41
Nov.	8	at NC State		W	27-23
Nov.	17	Pittsburgh		L	13-34
Nov.	24	at Duke		W	59-7
Dec.	22	vs. Memphis #		W	37-34

#Birmingham Bowl

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	ACC	NATIONAL
Scoring	32.8 ppg	5	35
Rushing	213.7 ypg	4	26
Passing	236.1 ypg	8	65
Total	449.8 ypg	4	28
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**ACC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	33.3 ppg	12	101
Rushing	192.5 ypg	10	93
Passing	266.1 ypg	13	117
Total	458.6 ypg	13	116
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**ACC**	**NATIONAL**
-3	-0.23	10	85

2019 RECRUITS

1. Donavon Greene, WR, Mount Airy, NC
2. Nolan Groulx, WR, Cornelius, NC
3. Shamar McCollum, DE, Hamer, SC
4. Jeremiah Gray, S, Charlotte, NC
5. Kendrell Flowers, RB, Columbia, SC
6. DeVonte Gordon, OL, Washington, DC
7. Michael Kern, QB, Orlando, FL
8. Trey Rucker, S, Fairfax, VA
9. CJ Elmonus, OT, Fairview, NC
10. Cameron Hite, TE, Greeneville, TN
11. Isaiah Chaney, DE, Cartersville, GA
12. Jaylen Hudson, LB, Fayetteville, NC
13. Chase Jones, LB, Warren, NJ
14. Isaiah Essissima, CB, Houston, TX
15. Zach Ranson, DB, Snellville, GA
16. AJ Williams, ATH, Bamberg, SC
17. Drelyn Ford, TE, Franklin, VA
18. Will Smart, DE, Morristown, NJ
19. Justin Williams, DE, Seffner, FL
20. Taylor Morin, WR, Centreville, VA
21. Ivan Mora, K, Dalton, GA
22. Kenneth Walker, RB, Arlington, TN

Recruits ranked according to the 247SportsComposite

Walter G. Arce Sr.

ADVANCED STATS

5 Factors: College Football's Most Important Stats

Field Position[1]		Rank
Offense	28.1	106
Defense	29.0	58
Margin	**-0.9**	**90**

Efficiency[2]		Rank
Offense	42.1%	70
Defense	40.5%	58
Margin	**+1.6%**	**61**

Explosiveness[3]		Rank
Offense	5.5	87
Defense	5.9	82
Margin	**-0.4**	**93**

Finishing Drives[4]		Rank
Offense	4.9	30
Defense	5.4	125
Margin	**-0.5**	**103**

Adjusted TO Margin[5]		Rank
Projected	1.0	58
Actual	-3	85
Margin	**-4.0**	**104**

KEY: **1**-Average starting field position by yard line; **2**-Rate of successful plays (gaining 50% of necessary yards on 1st down, 70% on 2nd down, 100% on 3rd down); **3**-Explosiveness=yards per play; **4**-Points per trip inside 40-yard line; **5**-TO margin accounting for "luck" • Advanced stats provided by Bill Connelly of SB Nation

NUMBERS TO KNOW

20.6

The ACC wasn't the most up-tempo conference in the world, but it wasn't Wake Forest's fault. The Demon Deacons averaged just 20.6 seconds between snaps, the fourth-fastest tempo in FBS, the fastest among power conference teams, and nearly two seconds per snap faster than anyone else in the ACC.

5.4

Red zone defense was a letdown for the Deacons. They allowed 5.4 points per scoring opportunity (first downs inside the defense's 40) in 2018, 125th in FBS and second worst in the ACC.

1948

In the name of consistency, this is a big year in Winston-Salem. The last time Wake Forest finished with a winning record in four straight seasons was 1945-48 under head coach D.C. Walker. Clawson's Deacs are sitting at three straight.

than 33 points per game and finished 116th in total defense. Assistants Dave Cohen and Lyle Hemphill took on larger roles, and the Deacons will still have a 4-2-5 look. However, they'll play three safeties or cornerbacks and not the rover linebacker position.

The defensive line also loses its core, graduating two tackles with 52 career starts. Junior Sulaiman Kamara will have to step up to lead a young group. End Carlos Basham Jr. (11 tackles for a loss) is a rising star, but the other end spot is a question mark. True freshman Shamar McCollum, a spring standout, could be the answer.

Linebacker was an issue last year, and that probably won't change as standout DJ Taylor is already lost for the season. Justin Strnad led the team in tackles, but he needs help, perhaps from former touted recruits Chase Monroe and Jeff Burley, who are now third-year sophomores who haven't played because of injuries.

After several years of struggles, cornerback could be a strength, led by Essang Bassey, who is one of the ACC's best. However, the veteran group needs to force more turnovers and be better against the run. The Deacons have some talent at safety, but not a lot of experience. Luke Masterson and Coby Davis may start, but Nasir Greer came on strong as a true freshman, and Traveon Redd excelled in the spring.

SPECIALISTS The Deacons also lose Dortch (two scores last season) as a returner, and Clawson's teams ranked at the bottom of the league before Dortch arrived. Beal-Smith and Hinton will get a chance to take over. The kicking game is solid, with Nick Sciba hitting 19-of-22 field goals as a true freshman and veteran Dom Maggio back as a reliable punter.

FINAL ANALYSIS Clawson has worked wonders on the field and off (fundraising is breaking records), but this season will be another challenge. Dortch and the line keyed the recent offensive surge, so Clawson's recruiting acumen will be tested as younger players have to step up. Injuries have hit the defense hard, thinning some of Clawson's classes, so the Deacons are not deep or experienced. The schedule isn't easy either, with Utah State (11 wins last year) on the nonconference slate, and three of the final four games on the road.

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (5)

WR	7	Scotty Washington (Sr.)	24	Donavon Greene (Fr.)
WR	**14**	**Sage Surratt (So.)**	89	A.T. Perry (Fr.)
WR	2	Kendall Hinton (Sr.)	22	Nolan Groulx (Fr.)
LT	75	Justin Herron (Sr.)	60	Taleni Suhren (Jr.)
LG	79	Sean Maginn (So.)	63	Je'Vionte' Nash (Jr.)
C	65	Zach Tom (So.)	55	Michael Jurgens (Fr.)
RG	**71**	**Nathan Gilliam (Sr.)**	58	Tyler Watson (So.)
RT	**73**	**Jake Benzinger (Sr.)**	76	Allan Rappleyea (So.)
TE	**86**	**Jack Freudenthal (Sr.)**	23	Brandon Chapman (Jr.)
QB	12	Jamie Newman (Jr.)	**10**	**Sam Hartman (So.)**
RB	36	Cade Carney (Sr.)	26	Christian Beal-Smith (So.)

DEFENSE (4)

Returning Starters in Bold

DE	**18**	**Carlos Basham Jr. (Jr.)**	94	Manny Walker (Jr.)
DT	72	Tyler Williams (So.)	53	Dion Bergan Jr. (So.)
DT	90	Sulaiman Kamara (Jr.)	40	Rondell Bothroyd (Fr.)
DE	14	Shamar McCollum (Fr.)	91	Malik Allen (So.)
LB	**23**	**Justin Strnad (Sr.)**	42	Chase Monroe (So.)
LB	45	Ryan Smenda Jr. (So.)	32	Jeff Burley (So.)
CB	**4**	**Amari Henderson (Sr.)**	24	Ja'Sir Taylor (Jr.)
CB	**21**	**Essang Bassey (Sr.)**	10	Kenneth Dicks III (Fr.)
S	30	Ja'Cquez Williams (Jr.)	15	Jake Simpson (Jr.)
SS	12	Luke Masterson (Jr.)	37	Nasir Greer (So.)
FS	20	Coby Davis (So.)	17	Traveon Redd (Jr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	96	Nick Sciba (So.)	KR	26	Christian Beal-Smith (So.)
P	8	Dom Maggio (Sr.)	PR	2	Kendall Hinton (Sr.)

2018 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Sam Hartman	**291**	**161**	**1,984**	**16**	**8**
Jamie Newman	**141**	**84**	**1,083**	**9**	**4**

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD
Cade Carney	**188**	**1,005**	**5.3**	**8**
Matt Colburn II	159	759	4.8	5
Sam Hartman	**107**	**275**	**2.6**	**2**
Jamie Newman	**64**	**247**	**3.9**	**4**

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Greg Dortch	89	1,078	12.1	8
Sage Surratt	**41**	**581**	**14.2**	**4**
Alex Bachman	37	541	14.6	6
Scotty Washington	**20**	**243**	**12.2**	**3**

KICKING: Nick Sciba, 19-22 FGs, 107 pts.

TACKLES: **Justin Strnad, 105**; Cameron Glenn, 98

SACKS: Willie Yarbary, 5.5

INTERCEPTIONS: 6 players tied with 1

Returning Players in **Bold**

SCOUTING THE DEMON DEACONS

OPPOSING COACHES SIZE UP WAKE FOREST

"They do a great job bothering you with that offense. They have a ton of speed, and they can't seem to go fast enough. They're going to use all four downs on you; they go for it when most coaches wouldn't. The result is that they make you start pressing more when you're on offense, and then the mistakes start. They're a team that can scheme you into a bad decision. … They have two quarterbacks who could start and do well for them, Jamie Newman and Sam Hartman — they look about even from what we've seen. … They're not going to maul you on defense. They don't have the bodies to do that. It really all rotates around their offense and trying to get you to play their pace. If you dictate terms and run the ball on them early, you can get them out of sorts. You beat them by being physical. … They're improving a lot in recruiting. For a long time they didn't have the size or athleticism at all, and you'd see them miss on in-state guys who would end up leaving for a G5 somewhere else. They're evaluating a lot better, and they're trying to fit for what they do. … They're going to have depth issues on defense that might hold them back this year, but that staff really fits for that job, and they're going in the right direction overall."

Duke **Blue Devils**

National Forecast: **66** • ACC Coastal Prediction: **5** • Projected Record: **5-7, 3-5 ACC**

Deon Jackson

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: David Cutcliffe
Record at School: 67-72 (11 years)
Career Record: 111-101 (17+ years)
Offensive Coordinator: Zac Roper
Defensive Coordinator: Ben Albert, Matt Guerrieri
Location: Durham, NC
Stadium: Wallace Wade Stadium (40,004)

KEY BLUE DEVILS

QUENTIN HARRIS, QB Completed 34-of-68 pass attempts for 437 yards with seven touchdowns and one interception, adding another five rushing touchdowns.

MARK GILBERT, CB A first-team All-ACC pick in 2017, Gilbert suffered a season-ending hip injury in the second game of the 2018 season.

DEON JACKSON, RB The top back in a talented stable, Jackson rushed for 847 yards and seven touchdowns on 161 carries.

KEY LOSSES

DANIEL JONES, QB The latest in David Cutcliffe's quarterback pipeline has gone from a walk-on at Duke to NFL Draft pick.

T.J. RAHMING, WR Rahming was Duke's top deep threat, finishing his four-year career with 253 catches for 2,919 yards and 13 touchdowns.

JOE GILES-HARRIS, LB Duke's security blanket is gone, and so too are the 313 tackles and 9.0 sacks he piled up over three seasons.

RISING STAR

A four-star recruit, cornerback **TONY DAVIS** chose Duke over Florida, Georgia and Michigan. Since enrolling in January, he has impressed coaches with his size and speed, and given the opportunities in the Blue Devils' secondary, he could see significant time as a true freshman.

Depending on perspective, Duke's 2018 season can be viewed as a glass half-full or a glass half-empty scenario.

On one hand, the Blue Devils won eight games for just the eighth time since 1960 and played in the program's sixth bowl game in the past seven years — easily Duke's most consistent run of success in history. On the other, Duke couldn't maintain momentum from a 4–0 nonconference start in the ACC's weak Coastal Division, squandering key home games on its way to a sixth-place finish as injuries and inconsistency ultimately kept the Blue Devils from achieving what could have been a 10-win season.

OFFENSE Losing a quarterback like Daniel Jones to the NFL Draft will certainly be a challenge, but it might not be the hurdle some are expecting as the Blue Devils turn to fifth-year senior Quentin Harris, who coach David Cutcliffe says took the reins in the spring.

"You can either be handed the reins or take them," Cutcliffe says. "Quentin is accomplished, right now, in running our offense, knows what he's doing, knows how to do it, and he has taken command of that operation, throwing the ball really well."

Harris not only thrived in Duke's red zone package last season, but he was also 2–0 as a starter and helped finish a road victory at Northwestern when Jones was injured.

The weapons he'll have are a little more uncertain, as sophomore Jake Bobo (10 catches, 167 yards) and senior Aaron Young (seven catches, 139 yards) are the only proven wideouts. Luckily for Duke, Cutcliffe was able to bring in a proven receivers coach in Trooper Taylor.

Look for Duke to lean on the run more than in recent years, with Deon Jackson and Brittain Brown back and Harris more than capable of succeeding as a dual-threat.

After allowing 30 sacks last season (78th nationally), the offensive line should hold up better. The unit is anchored by Jack Wohlabaugh at center and Robert Kraeling at right tackle.

DEFENSE This could be a bumpy ride. After ranking 72nd in scoring defense and 77th in total defense last season, the Blue Devils lose three of their top four tacklers. That's not to say that Duke doesn't have talent on defense, but there's little margin for error without much depth.

The strength of the unit is up front, starting with junior end Victor Dimukeje, who totaled 42 tackles, including 8.5 for a loss. Drew Jordan will hold down the other end, looking to build on a season that saw him record 33 tackles and 2.5 sacks.

Chris Rumph II, a Freshman All-American last season, will be the defense's X-factor after showing off his versatility with 25 tackles, eight for a loss, and three sacks. Given Rumph's ability, defensive coordinator Matt Guerrieri will get him on the field in multiple positions.

The middle of the defense is the biggest question, with Koby Quansah, Xander Gagnon and Brandon Hill battling for the spots vacated by three-year starters Joe Giles-Harris and Ben Humphreys.

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	vs. Alabama #
Sept.	7	North Carolina A&T
Sept.	14	at Middle Tennessee
Sept.	27	at Virginia Tech
Oct.	5	Pittsburgh
Oct.	12	Georgia Tech
Oct.	19	at Virginia
Oct.	26	at North Carolina
Nov.	9	Notre Dame
Nov.	16	Syracuse
Nov.	23	at Wake Forest
Nov.	30	Miami

#Atlanta

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 8-5, 3-5 ACC

Aug.	31	Army	W	34-14
Sept.	8	at Northwestern	W	21-7
Sept.	15	at Baylor	W	40-27
Sept.	22	NC Central	W	55-13
Sept.	29	Virginia Tech	L	14-31
Oct.	13	at Georgia Tech	W	28-14
Oct.	20	Virginia	L	14-28
Oct.	27	at Pittsburgh	L	45-54
Nov.	3	at Miami (Fla.)	W	20-12
Nov.	10	North Carolina	W	42-35
Nov.	17	at Clemson	L	6-35
Nov.	24	Wake Forest	L	7-59
Dec.	27	vs. Temple %	W	56-27

%Independence Bowl

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	ACC	NATIONAL
Scoring	29.4 ppg	8	64
Rushing	159.6 ypg	11	78
Passing	246.1 ypg	7	53
Total	405.7 ypg	8	65
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**ACC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	27.4 ppg	7	72
Rushing	209.3 ypg	11	105
Passing	199.5 ypg	4	36
Total	408.8 ypg	8	77
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**ACC**	**NATIONAL**
-7	-0.54	11	110

2019 RECRUITS

1. Tony Davis, CB, Gastonia, NC
2. Jacob Monk, OG, Clayton, NC
3. DeWayne Carter, DT, Pickerington, OH
4. Eli Pancol, WR, Pendleton, IN
5. Ron Carr, OT, Solon, OH
6. Isaiah Kemp, CB, Wilmington, NC
7. Ahmad Craig, DE, Buford, GA
8. Darrell Harding, WR, Winter Garden, FL
9. Jalen Alexander, CB, Loganville, GA
10. RJ Oben, DE, Montclair, NJ
11. Christian Rorie, DE, Raleigh, NC
12. John Gelotte, OT, Moore, SC
13. Caleb Oppan, DE, Kennesaw, GA
14. Jalon Calhoun, WR, Greenville, SC
15. Jordan Waters, DB, Fairmont, NC
16. Sayyid Stevens, LB, Midway, GA
17. Elijah Wroten, OG, Fort Washington, PA
18. Matt Smith, TE, Needham, MA
19. Jaylen Coleman, RB, Matthews, NC
20. Charlie Ham, K, Atlanta, GA
21. Porter Wilson, P, Akron, OH

Recruits ranked according to the 247SportsComposite

Chris Covatta

ADVANCED STATS

5 Factors: College Football's Most Important Stats

Field Position[1]		Rank
Offense	32.6	14
Defense	27.1	15
Margin	+5.5	10
Efficiency[2]		**Rank**
Offense	41.6%	75
Defense	39.7%	45
Margin	+1.9%	58
Explosiveness[3]		**Rank**
Offense	5.5	80
Defense	5.5	52
Margin	+0.0	77
Finishing Drives[4]		**Rank**
Offense	4.8	38
Defense	4.5	65
Margin	+0.3	47
Adjusted TO Margin[5]		**Rank**
Projected	-3.2	98
Actual	-7	111
Margin	-3.8	102

KEY: 1-Average starting field position by yard line; **2**-Rate of successful plays (gaining 50% of necessary yards on 1st down, 70% on 2nd down, 100% on 3rd down); **3**-Explosiveness=yards per play; **4**-Points per trip inside 40-yard line; **5**-TO margin accounting for "luck" • Advanced stats provided by Bill Connelly of SB Nation

NUMBERS TO KNOW

85/80

Prepare for a reset in the passing game. Duke must replace 85 percent of last year's passing yards and 80 percent of receiver/tight end receiving yards. Only one returning pass-catcher caught more than 10 passes: tight end Noah Gray.

1.1

The Blue Devils set themselves up for third down success. Their average yardage to go was 6.4 yards, while opponents averaged 7.5 yards — a plus-1.1-yard margin that ranked 18th in FBS. Unfortunately, they ranked just 78th in conversion rate allowed.

22.8

A lack of playmakers in the secondary hurt on third downs. While opponents threw 189 incomplete passes in 2018, only 43 of them — 22.8 percent, lowest in FBS — were defensed (intercepted or broken up) by Duke defenders.

As the defense struggled with injuries last season, one positive came out of the constant lineup shuffling. "The fortunate thing is you probably saw the defense that is going to play this year and the year after that," Guerrieri says.

That's the case in the secondary, where eight players who have started at least two games will return. Included among that group is standout corner Mark Gilbert, who is returning from a season-ending hip injury that required surgery in September. Sophomore Josh Blackwell and junior Michael Carter II stepped up as veterans went down, and Carter could be especially valuable this season with the versatility to play all five spots in the Duke secondary.

SPECIALISTS Austin Parker will likely handle all of the Blue Devils' kicking duties again after sticking to punting in 2018, when he averaged a solid 41.4 yards per attempt. In 2017, Parker converted 17-of-21 field goal attempts, with a long of 45 yards.

FINAL ANALYSIS The Blue Devils will kick off the 2019 season with a number of questions, and due to a brutal schedule, there won't be many opportunities to work out the answers.

Not only do dates with Alabama and Notre Dame await, but a trip to Middle Tennessee will also provide a challenge. Even the conference schedule gets tougher with a crossover game against fast-rising Syracuse.

There's no doubt Harris will be ready to lead the offense, and while he'll have a talented rotation of running backs, there will be a major learning curve at receiver, allowing opponents to load the box against an offensive line that still must prove itself.

Duke will have an opportunity to control the line of scrimmage on defense, but that could be negated if the other seven players on the field don't get up to speed quickly.

With so many questions, it's difficult to project a seventh bowl appearance in the past eight seasons, but the Blue Devils should have a shot if the secondary lives up to its potential.

At the least, the ever-optimistic Cutcliffe expects to have a team capable of making a run in November. "The identity is going to be conditioned. We're going to be fit," he says. "We haven't run like this since our first year at Duke."

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (5)

WR	81	Aaron Young (Sr.)	11	Scott Bracey (Jr.)
WR	19	Jake Bobo (So.)	14	Dennis Smith (Fr.)
WR	85	Damond Philyaw-Johnson (So.)	24	Jarett Garner (Fr.)
LT	66	Jaylen Miller (Jr.)	60	Patrick Leitten (So.)
LG	**65**	**Julian Santos (Sr.)**	69	Zach Baker (Sr.)
C	**50**	**Jack Wohlabaugh (Jr.)**	55	Will Taylor (So.)
RG	**67**	**Rakavius Chambers (Jr.)**	78	Casey Holman (Fr.)
RT	**77**	**Robert Kraeling (Jr.)**	75	Liam Smith (Jr.)
TE	87	Noah Gray (Jr.)	83	Zamari Ellis (Fr.)
QB	18	Quentin Harris (Sr.)	12	Gunnar Holmberg (Fr.)
RB	**25**	**Deon Jackson (Jr.)**	8	Brittain Brown (Jr.)

DEFENSE (9)

Returning Starters in Bold

DE	**86**	**Drew Jordan (Jr.)**	59	Tre Hornbuckle (Sr.)
DT	**54**	**Derrick Tangelo (Jr.)**	53	Tahj Rice (So.)
DT	**95**	**Trevon McSwain (Sr.)**	92	Edgar Cerenord (Sr.)
DE	**51**	**Victor Dimukeje (Jr.)**	96	Chris Rumph II (So.)
LB	32	Brandon Hill (Jr.)	41	Xander Gagnon (Jr.)
LB	49	Koby Quansah (Sr.)	43	Rocky Shelton II (Fr.)
CB	**28**	**Mark Gilbert (Jr.)**	4	Myles Hudzick (Jr.)
CB	31	Josh Blackwell (So.)	13	Tony Davis (Fr.)
S	**26**	**Michael Carter II (Jr.)**	27	Damani Neal (So.)
S	**10**	**Marquis Waters (Jr.)**	**33**	**Leonard Johnson (So.)**
S	**16**	**Dylan Singleton (Sr.)**	23	Lummie Young IV (So.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	45	Austin Parker (Sr.)	**KR**	25	Deon Jackson (Jr.)
P	45	Austin Parker (Sr.)	**PR**	19	Jake Bobo (So.)

2018 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Daniel Jones	392	237	2,674	22	9
Quentin Harris	**68**	**34**	**437**	**7**	**1**
Chris Katrenick	**12**	**5**	**54**	**1**	**0**

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD
Deon Jackson	**161**	**847**	**5.3**	**7**
Brittain Brown	**80**	**369**	**4.6**	**3**
Daniel Jones	104	319	3.1	3

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
T.J. Rahming	75	811	10.8	8
Johnathan Lloyd	51	604	11.8	5
Chris Taylor	31	419	13.5	3
Deon Jackson	**26**	**253**	**9.7**	**2**

KICKING: Collin Wareham, 9-13 FGs, 76 pts.

TACKLES: Joe Giles-Harris, 81; Dylan Singleton, 73

SACKS: **Victor Dimukeje, 3.5**

INTERCEPTIONS: 4 players tied with 1

Returning Players in **Bold**

SCOUTING THE BLUE DEVILS

OPPOSING COACHES SIZE UP DUKE

"Duke is on a different plane. David Cutcliffe is a master tactician, and the school has been so patient and bought in on how he does it. They're taking two-stars that outplay your five-stars four years into development. … Cut is the quarterback guy, and Daniel Jones might be one of his most remarkable achievements to date. That kid is a walking advertisement for playing ball for David Cutcliffe. He's going to step into the NFL as ready-made as you can be.. … Quentin Harris is the next guy there. You won't see him do what Jones did last season, and he won't have to overextend; they have a really nice backfield around him. Deon Jackson is a legit talent there and could be one of the best in the league and the country if they lean on him. He'll be their feature, but Cut always has a rotation of backs. … The defense is a tougher situation. Losing a heart and soul guy like Joe Giles-Harris early really hurts them a lot. They have really physical 1's on defense, but you see the gap between them and the top programs when you get on their 2's. The talent isn't comparable. … I think they still benefit from the perception against the program being a basketball school where football doesn't matter. You go into their place and it's quiet and your kids aren't as focused or taking it seriously and then they just chop you down."

Georgia Tech **Yellow Jackets**

National Forecast: **75** • ACC Coastal Prediction: **7** • Projected Record: **4-8, 2-6 ACC**

Jerry Howard Jr.

The most challenging question facing Geoff Collins in his first season at Georgia Tech: What can a group of players recruited to play in Paul Johnson's triple-option offense do in a completely different system? To find that answer, Georgia Tech has left no stone unturned. While Collins and his staff plan an eventual roster makeover, they're aiming to compete now using Johnson's recruits by moving many of them to new positions, toggling some between offense and defense and experimenting with personnel groups that will feature the best players used in a variety of roles.

For Collins, it's not a completely foreign approach — player versatility was "part of our DNA as an organization" in his previous stop at Temple — but it was taken to the extreme this spring with approximately 20 players seeing time on both offense and defense. Given that lack of clarity, Georgia Tech enters 2019 as one of the biggest mysteries in college football.

OFFENSE The transition from the option to what Collins calls "an NFL-style, spread-based attack" that threw the ball almost as much as it ran at Temple is going to require some creativity from coordinator Dave Patenaude's staff. Coaches will have to oversee the development of new skill sets and also redistribute some of the talent from running back to receiver (Nathan Cottrell, who had 46 carries last year, is being developed to play the slot) while finding a tight end, a position that didn't even exist under Johnson (the Yellow Jackets will rely on UConn graduate transfer Tyler Davis to fill that role).

Settling on a quarterback will be the biggest challenge, since all three potential starters were recruited with the option in mind. Tobias Oliver showed flashes of big-time ability last year as a redshirt freshman, but he attempted only 16 passes. Redshirt junior Lucas Johnson, who missed last year due to a foot injury, was a proficient passer in high school but hasn't seen many live snaps. James Graham, a highly recruited dual-threat athlete, redshirted last year. Still, Collins has an optimistic view of what he inherited, saying that his players have embraced the terminology, timing and throwing motion Patenaude teaches.

Georgia Tech will have plenty of depth at running back — KirVonte Benson, who had 1,053 yards in 2017, is coming back off an ACL injury to bolster returners Jordan Mason (6.1 ypc, seven TDs) and Jerry Howard Jr. (5.3 ypc, five TDs). But the key to the running game could be how well an offensive line with a decent amount of starting experience transitions to a new style of blocking, where they'll often be asked to play in a shotgun stance.

DEFENSE The trademark of Collins' defense from coordinator stops at Mississippi State and Florida was a group that played with "swag" and "juice," forced teams into uncomfortable situations and then brought mayhem with unique third down packages that created a lot of sacks and turnovers. That won't be easy to replicate right away, not after inheriting a group of linebackers and defensive linemen who haven't played many snaps.

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Geoff Collins
Record at School: First Season
Career Record: 15-10 (2 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Dave Patenaude
Defensive Coordinators: Nathan Burton, Andrew Thacker
Location: Atlanta, GA
Stadium: Bobby Dodd Stadium (55,000)

KEY YELLOW JACKETS

JERRY HOWARD JR., RB Had 564 yards on 107 rushing attempts last season but might project as more of a fullback type in this system.

KENNY COOPER, C The senior finished last season as the starting center but can provide some position flexibility across the front.

DAVID CURRY, LB After collecting 47 tackles on the weak side, Curry is moving to the Mike or inside position this season and will be expected to anchor the run defense.

KEY LOSSES

TAQUON MARSHALL, QB Accounted for 23 percent of Georgia Tech's rushing yardage last season.

ANREE SAINT-AMOUR, DE The Yellow Jackets will miss his pass-rushing presence; racked up 12 TFLs and four sacks last season, along with a pair of interceptions.

JALEN JOHNSON, LB Thrived as a senior after moving from safety to outside linebacker. A strong run stopper with 66 tackles and 7.5 TFLs.

RISING STAR

In his first signing class, Geoff Collins was able to hold on to the commitment of cornerback **JORDAN HUFF**. Huff enrolled early and made a big impression in the spring, as the 6'2" freshman embodies the kind of size and length Collins wants at the position.

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	29	at Clemson
Sept.	7	South Florida
Sept.	14	The Citadel
Sept.	28	at Temple
Oct.	5	North Carolina
Oct.	12	at Duke
Oct.	19	at Miami (Fla.)
Nov.	2	Pittsburgh
Nov.	9	at Virginia
Nov.	16	Virginia Tech
Nov.	21	NC State
Nov.	30	Georgia

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 7-6, 5-3 ACC

Sept.	1	Alcorn State	W	41-0
Sept.	8	at South Florida	L	38-49
Sept.	15	at Pittsburgh	L	19-24
Sept.	22	Clemson	L	21-49
Sept.	29	Bowling Green	W	63-17
Oct.	5	at Louisville	W	66-31
Oct.	13	Duke	L	14-28
Oct.	25	at Virginia Tech	W	49-28
Nov.	3	at North Carolina	W	38-28
Nov.	10	Miami (Fla.)	W	27-21
Nov.	17	Virginia (ot)	W	30-27
Nov.	24	at Georgia	L	21-45
Dec.	26	vs. Minnesota #	L	10-34

#Quick Lane Bowl

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	ACC	NATIONAL
Scoring	33.6 ppg	4	33
Rushing	325.0 ypg	1	1
Passing	83.8 ypg	14	126
Total	408.8 ypg	7	61
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**ACC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	29.3 ppg	9	79
Rushing	157.9 ypg	7	56
Passing	211.7 ypg	7	50
Total	369.6 ypg	4	46
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**ACC**	**NATIONAL**
+8	+0.62	2	20

2019 RECRUITS

1. Jamious Griffin, RB, Rome, GA
2. Wesley Walker, CB, Nashville, TN
3. Kalani Norris, WR, Miami, FL
4. Ahmarean Brown, WR, Tampa, FL
5. Jordan Yates, QB, Alpharetta, GA
6. Jordan Huff, DB, Madison, GA
7. Sylvain Yondjouen, DE, Ruisbroek, Belgium
8. Zach Owens, WR, Marietta, GA
9. Kenan Johnson, CB, Minneola, FL
10. Mike Lockhart, DT, Birmingham, AL
11. Tony Amerson, RB, Montgomery, AL
12. Chico Bennett Jr., LB, Ashburn, VA
13. Devin Ellison, RB, Jacksonville, FL
14. Nazir Burnett, WR, Harrisburg, PA
15. Dylan Deveney, TE, Medford, NJ
16. Jeremiah Smith, S, Grayson, GA
17. Demetrius Knight, QB, Locust Grove, GA
18. Cornelius Evans, LB, Lawrenceville, GA
19. D'Quan Douse, DE, Savannah, GA
20. Jamal Camp, DT, Cumming, GA

Recruits ranked according to the 247SportsComposite

Harrison McClary

ADVANCED STATS

5 Factors: College Football's Most Important Stats

Field Position[1]		Rank
Offense	31.3	31
Defense	29.8	78
Margin	+1.5	51

Efficiency[2]		Rank
Offense	49.7%	6
Defense	49.8%	126
Margin	-0.1%	77

Explosiveness[3]		Rank
Offense	6.1	41
Defense	6.0	93
Margin	+0.1	72

Finishing Drives[4]		Rank
Offense	4.8	48
Defense	5.4	124
Margin	-0.6	108

Adjusted TO Margin[5]		Rank
Projected	-0.8	80
Actual	8	20
Margin	+8.8	5

KEY: 1-Average starting field position by yard line; **2**-Rate of successful plays (gaining 50% of necessary yards on 1st down, 70% on 2nd down, 100% on 3rd down); **3**-Explosiveness=yards per play; **4**-Points per trip inside 40-yard line; **5**-TO margin accounting for "luck" • Advanced stats provided by Bill Connelly of SB Nation

NUMBERS TO KNOW

49.7

Third-and-short for everyone: Tech's offensive success rate (percentage of plays that gained at least 50 percent of necessary yardage on first down, 70 percent on second, or 100 percent on third or fourth) was 49.7 percent (sixth in FBS), and its defensive success rate was 49.8 percent (fifth worst).

-0.8

Based on national averages for fumble recovery rates and the ratio of interceptions to passes broken up, Tech's turnover margin should have been about minus-0.8 in 2018. Instead, it was plus-8. The Jackets maybe don't make a bowl in Johnson's final season without turnovers luck.

2014

Tech hasn't had a receiver catch more than 25 passes in a season since 2014. That may be the college football streak most likely to end in 2019.

The secondary will be the bedrock of Georgia Tech's defense, with junior safety Tariq Carpenter (55 tackles, two INTs) and sophomore corner Tre Swilling (24 tackles, six PBUs) establishing themselves as potential standouts last season and former backups Kaleb Oliver and Christian Campbell catching Collins' eye in the spring. Sophomore Juanyeh Thomas, who established himself as a strong kick returner last year, will also be asked to do more at safety. But will that be enough to balance some concerns up front, where Antwan Owens is the only significant contributor from last season returning?

It helps that Ja'Quon Griffin and Jordan Domineck, both redshirt freshmen, got a handful of snaps last year. But essentially, Georgia Tech is starting over on the defensive line, which explains why they rotated two offensive linemen over every day during spring. Former starting center Jahaziel Lee could end up sticking on that side of the ball, while Brad Morgan and Connor Hansen have shown some ability.

Though there's a lack of depth at linebacker, senior David Curry (47 tackles) is solid, and sophomore Quez Jackson could be poised for a breakout season.

SPECIALISTS The Yellow Jackets have solid specialists returning with placekicker Wesley Wells, who made all nine field goal attempts as a freshman, and strong-legged punter Pressley Harvin III (41.3-yard average). Thomas, who brought a pair of kickoffs back for scores last year, could be one of the country's most dangerous returners. Collins has focused on improving kickoff accuracy and coverage.

FINAL ANALYSIS Though Johnson had a fruitful 11-year run on The Flats, Georgia Tech fans have embraced both the stylistic change and the high-energy approach of Collins, who is well positioned to elevate the level of recruiting from the previous regime. It's no secret that moving away from the option will present some initial challenges as the roster turns over, but Collins and his staff have tried to be resourceful in getting "a 360-degree view of every player on our roster" to see how they can contribute in a new system. If he can get Georgia Tech to a bowl game in Year 1, that effort will be considered a big success.

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (4)

WR	**80**	**Jalen Camp (Sr.)**	86	Jair Hawkins-Anderson (Jr.)
WR	81	Malachi Carter (So.)	17	Jaylen Jackson (Fr.)
SLOT	31	Nathan Cottrell (Sr.)	12	Adonicas Sanders (So.)
LT	**73**	**Zach Quinney (So.)**	70	Jared Southers (Sr.)
LG	60	Brad Morgan (Sr.)	59	Scott Morgan (Sr.)
C	**55**	**Kenny Cooper (Sr.)**	53	Jahaziel Lee (Sr.)
RG	**56**	**Connor Hansen (Jr.)**	66	Jack Coco (So.)
RT	78	Jack DeFoor (Jr.)	72	Charlie Clark (So.)
TE	9	Tyler Davis (Sr.)	40	Nathan Tyler (Fr.)
QB	8	Tobias Oliver (So.)	7	Lucas Johnson (Jr.)
RB	30	KirVonte Benson (Sr.)	5	Jerry Howard Jr. (Jr.)

DEFENSE (3)

Returning Starters in Bold

DE	89	Antwan Owens (Jr.)	91	Kelton Dawson (So.)
DT	53	Jahaziel Lee (Sr.)	92	Ja'Quon Griffin (Fr.)
DT	97	Brentavious Glanton (Sr.)	52	Justice Dingle (Fr.)
DE	41	Jaquan Henderson (Jr.)	93	T.K. Chimedza (Fr.)
LB	**6**	**David Curry (Sr.)**	12	Bruce Jordan-Swilling (Jr.)
LB	44	Quez Jackson (So.)	45	Charlie Thomas (So.)
CB	**3**	**Tre Swilling (So.)**	38	Ajani Kerr (Jr.)
CB	33	Jaytlin Askew (Jr.)	23	Jordan Huff (Fr.)
S	1	Juanyeh Thomas (So.)	13	Avery Showell (So.)
S	**29**	**Tariq Carpenter (Jr.)**	10	Christian Campbell (Sr.)
NB	22	Kaleb Oliver (So.)	34	Gentry Bonds (So.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	38	Wesley Wells (So.)	KR	1	Juanyeh Thomas (So.)
P	27	Pressley Harvin III (Jr.)	PR	1	Juanyeh Thomas (So.)

2018 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
TaQuon Marshall	109	48	900	5	4
Tobias Oliver	**16**	**7**	**167**	**2**	**0**

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD
TaQuon Marshall	216	971	4.5	11
Tobias Oliver	**152**	**876**	**5.8**	**12**
Jordan Mason	**108**	**659**	**6.1**	**7**
Jerry Howard Jr.	**107**	**564**	**5.3**	**5**

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Brad Stewart	15	268	17.9	3
Jalen Camp	**11**	**186**	**16.9**	**0**
Qua Searcy	9	247	27.4	1
Clinton Lynch	7	209	29.9	2

KICKING: **Wesley Wells, 9-9 FGs, 66 pts.**
TACKLES: Malik Rivera, 68; Jalen Johnson, 66
SACKS: Anree Saint-Amour, 4.0
INTERCEPTIONS: 3 players tied with 2

Returning Players in **Bold**

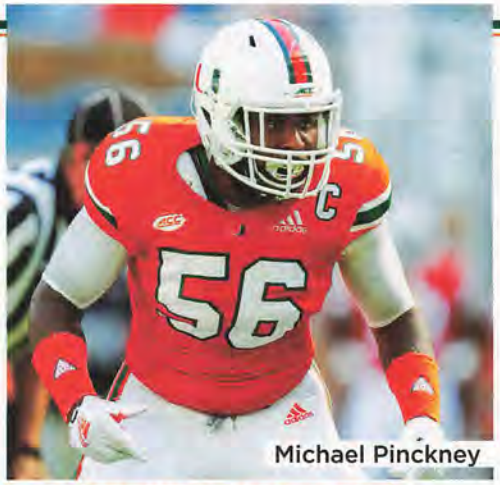
SCOUTING THE YELLOW JACKETS

OPPOSING COACHES SIZE UP GEORGIA TECH

"The new coaching staff has brought in a lot of attention. They really needed that, because Georgia Tech has been asleep for a long time. But this is still a transition year. They have to keep doing all the social media PR stuff, because when you're undoing a triple-option roster, you're gonna get your butt handed to you for a bit. … They're going to have to rework their entire offensive line. We've had some visiting coaches who saw Tech tell us they're a ways off of being even decent. That's what you expect, though. These guys are smaller, four-point stance guys who have never gone into proper pass protection schemes. … Tobias Oliver is their best quarterback, but he's definitely a triple guy. They could end up starting someone new if he can't make the throws. … They have no tight end position, so they'll have to build that from scratch. They have no possession receivers and a lot of dudes who block and break out wide open on play-actions. Lots of work there. … Defensively is a little bit better news — at least they have the right kind of bodies. They lost most of their key guys under Ted Roof. They were bad at creating pressures last year, and we'd been watching their defense get slower and less physical for a while."

Miami **Hurricanes**

National Forecast: **28** • ACC Coastal Prediction: **3** • Projected Record: **8-4, 5-3 ACC**



Michael Pinckney

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Manny Diaz
Record at School: First Season
Career Record: First Season
Offensive Coordinator: Dan Enos
Defensive Coordinators: Blake Baker, Ephraim Banda
Location: Coral Gables, FL
Stadium: Hard Rock Stadium (64,767)

KEY HURRICANES

JONATHAN GARVIN, DE Exploded for 17 tackles for a loss, 5.5 sacks, five pass breakups and a fumble return touchdown as a sophomore.

SHAQUILLE QUARTERMAN, LB Has made 249 tackles for his career and had a career-high 14 tackles for a loss and six sacks in 2018.

TRAJAN BANDY, CB Productive both far from the line of scrimmage (three interceptions, eight breakups) and near it (4.5 tackles for a loss).

KEY LOSSES

GERALD WILLIS III, DT Enjoyed ultimate senior breakout season, logging 18 tackles for a loss (four vs. LSU alone) and four sacks.

JAQUAN JOHNSON, S Earned All-ACC honors from *Pro Football Focus* after leading Miami in tackles and picking off two passes.

JOE JACKSON, DE Overshadowed by Willis and Garvin, the other end still recorded 14.5 tackles for a loss and a team-leading nine sacks.

RISING STAR

Miami's rebound hopes will center around a young quarterback. It could very well be Ohio State transfer **TATE MARTELL**. A top-five quarterback in the 2017 recruiting class, Martell is an efficient runner and threw safe, accurate passes in reserve time last fall for the Buckeyes.

Heading into 2018, it was really easy to feel like coach Mark Richt and Miami were basically two "ifs" away from being a legitimate top-10 contender:

1. If they improve at the quarterback position…

2. If No. 1 receiver Ahmmon Richards can stay healthy after an injury-plagued 2017…

The Hurricanes had an exciting skill corps, and their defense appeared loaded once more. They needed just a little bit of development and a little bit of injury luck.

Just one catch into 2018, Richards didn't merely go down; he also took a medical retirement from the sport. And the quarterbacks — mainly senior Malik Rosier and redshirt freshman N'Kosi Perry — showed minimal signs of development in his absence. The defense was again dominant, but the Canes couldn't score points and fell to 7–6.

Given the choice between re-tooling his offensive staff (which likely would have required firing his son, Jon, among others) or retiring, Richt chose the latter.

Former defensive coordinator Manny Diaz, who had just taken the Temple head coaching job weeks earlier, was brought home to manage yet another Miami rebound attempt. And once again, success will probably depend on fixing a moribund offense.

OFFENSE New offensive coordinator Dan Enos, most recently Alabama's quarterbacks coach, will have plenty of young quarterbacks to choose from. Richt kept trying to give Perry the reins in 2018, and he kept proving he wasn't ready. Perry now has to fend off redshirt freshman Jarren Williams and Ohio State transfer Tate Martell, who was granted immediate eligibility. Merely average QB play could make the difference in quite a few games.

Without Richards, Jeff Thomas took on a No. 1 receiver's load from the slot, and freshman Brevin Jordan was asked to contribute a lot as well. They did alright — Thomas averaged 16.1 yards per catch with a 59 percent catch rate — but the Canes could have been more dangerous with a true No. 1 lined up wide.

Enter K.J. Osborn. The Buffalo graduate transfer caught 53 passes for 892 yards and seven scores last year. Between Osborn, Thomas, Jordan, and any number of recent blue-chippers, Miami could threaten to overwhelm opponents with exciting receiving options. Now they just need a QB to get them the ball.

Considering how little opponents had to respect Miami's passing game, Travis Homer and DeeJay Dallas acquitted themselves awfully well on the ground. They were a bit on the all-or-nothing side, but there were quite a few "alls," at least. Homer's off to the pros, but Dallas could be ready for a star turn.

There's quite a bit of retooling ahead for new line coach Butch Barry. Of the seven linemen who started at least five games last year, five are gone, including the two guys who started a combined 25 games (tackle Tyree St. Louis and Tyler Gauthier). The line was a work in progress in the spring and could remain so well into the fall.

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	vs. Florida #
Sept.	7	at North Carolina
Sept.	14	Bethune-Cookman
Sept.	21	Central Michigan
Oct.	5	Virginia Tech
Oct.	11	Virginia
Oct.	19	Georgia Tech
Oct.	26	at Pittsburgh
Nov.	2	at Florida State
Nov.	9	Louisville
Nov.	23	at FIU
Nov.	30	at Duke

#Orlando

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 7-6, 4-4 ACC

Sept.	2	vs. LSU #	L	17-33
Sept.	8	Savannah State	W	77-0
Sept.	15	at Toledo	W	49-24
Sept.	22	FIU	W	31-17
Sept.	27	North Carolina	W	47-10
Oct.	6	Florida State	W	28-27
Oct.	13	at Virginia	L	13-16
Oct.	26	at Boston College	L	14-27
Nov.	3	Duke	L	12-20
Nov.	10	at Georgia Tech	L	21-27
Nov.	17	at Virginia Tech	W	38-14
Nov.	24	Pittsburgh	W	24-3
Dec.	27	vs. Wisconsin %	L	3-35

#Arlington, TX %Pinstripe Bowl

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	ACC	NATIONAL
Scoring	28.8 ppg	9	66
Rushing	191.5 ypg	7	45
Passing	167.3 ypg	12	113
Total	358.8 ypg	13	105
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**ACC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	19.5 ppg	2	18
Rushing	143.3 ypg	3	42
Passing	135.6 ypg	1	1
Total	278.9 ypg	1	4
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**ACC**	**NATIONAL**
-1	-0.08	9	73

2019 RECRUITS

1. Jeremiah Payton, WR, Neptune Beach, FL
2. Christian Williams, CB, Daphne, AL
3. Keontra Smith, S, Hollywood, FL
4. Avery Huff, LB, Fort Lauderdale, FL
5. Jahfari Harvey, DE, Port St. Lucie, FL
6. Jason Blissett, DT, Queens, NY
7. Te'Cory Couch, CB, Hollywood, FL
8. Cameron Williams, DE, Fort Lauderdale, FL
9. Jared Harrison-Hunte, DT, Middle Village, NY
10. Larry Hodges, TE, Tampa, FL
11. Sam Brooks, LB, Miami, FL
12. Jalar Holley, DT, Auburn, GA
13. Adam ElGammal, OT, Middle Village, NY
14. Zion Nelson, OT, Sumter, SC
15. Jakai Clark, C, Loganville, GA
16. Peyton Matocha, QB, Houston, TX
17. Louis Hedley, P, Mandurah, Australia*

*junior college transfer

Recruits ranked according to the 247SportsComposite

Tom DiPace

ADVANCED STATS

5 Factors: College Football's Most Important Stats

Field Position[1]		Rank
Offense	31.2	36
Defense	33.5	124
Margin	**-2.3**	**99**

Efficiency[2]		Rank
Offense	37.9%	109
Defense	34.7%	10
Margin	**+3.2%**	**47**

Explosiveness[3]		Rank
Offense	5.6	75
Defense	4.3	3
Margin	**+1.3**	**15**

Finishing Drives[4]		Rank
Offense	5.2	15
Defense	3.5	6
Margin	**+1.7**	**5**

Adjusted TO Margin[5]		Rank
Projected	-2.1	90
Actual	-1	72
Margin	**+1.1**	**49**

KEY: 1-Average starting field position by yard line; **2**-Rate of successful plays (gaining 50% of necessary yards on 1st down, 70% on 2nd down, 100% on 3rd down); **3**-Explosiveness=yards per play; **4**-Points per trip inside 40-yard line; **5**-TO margin accounting for "luck" • Advanced stats provided by Bill Connelly of SB Nation

NUMBERS TO KNOW

24.2

Havoc rate is a team's total tackles for a loss, passes defensed and forced fumbles divided by total plays. Miami's was 24.2 percent, easily the best in FBS. The front seven was the havoc driver: Its 16.4 percent havoc rate also ranked No. 1.

17.7

Unfortunately, Miami's offense also allowed a high havoc rate: 17.7 percent, 100th in FBS. Passes defensed were a particular problem: Opponents intercepted 14 passes and broke up another 48.

40.7

The result of all these negative plays: lots of third-and-longs. Miami's average third down distance was 7.5 yards (103rd in FBS), while opponents averaged 8.0 yards to go (11th). It was almost a miracle that the offense ranked 54th in third down conversion rate at 40.7 percent.

DEFENSE Miami ranked first in the country in havoc rate (total combined tackles for a loss, passes defensed and forced fumbles, divided by total plays) and was equally disruptive against both run and pass. Ends Jonathan Garvin and Joe Jackson and tackle Gerald Willis III combined for 49.5 TFLs, 18.5 sacks and 11 passes defensed. Willis came out of nowhere for a monster senior year. Of this trio, only Garvin returns.

There are certainly plenty of breakout candidates, from senior end Scott Patchan to sophomore blue-chipper Nesta Jade Silvera to any number of transfers: Jaelan Phillips (UCLA), Chigozie Nnoruka (UCLA) or Trevon Hill (Virginia Tech). Quantity is on Miami's side here. So is Diaz's track record.

The line has got one heck of a linebacking corps protecting it. Shaquille Quarterman and Michael Pinckney both returned for their respective senior seasons after combining for 25 TFLs and 9.5 sacks. Seniors Zach McCloud and Romeo Finley are back to man the striker position (basically a nickel linebacker) as well.

The front seven will need to remain heavy on the havoc. Safeties Jaquan Johnson and Sheldrick Redwine and corner Michael Jackson Sr. are all gone, and Miami will be hard-pressed to match last year's rankings in pass defense (first in passer rating allowed, 11th in completion rate, 16th in interceptions). At least the Canes still have Trajan Bandy; the junior should be one of the best corners in the country. The rest of the spots are up for grabs, though. Diaz added yet another transfer in USC blue-chipper Bubba Bolden, who missed 2018 due to a suspension, and he signed three four-star freshmen as well.

SPECIALISTS Miami might have been the worst punting team in FBS, and when you've also got major offensive efficiency problems, that's a recipe for terrible field position. If junior college transfer Louis Hedley can right that ship, the Canes could have a solid special teams unit.

FINAL ANALYSIS The burden of expectations will be a little lower than at this time last year, but it's never very low at Miami. With mere competence at QB, and on offense as a whole, the Coastal Division is certainly within reach. But the Canes do bear the burden of proof this time around.

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (4)

WR	2	K.J. Osborn (Sr.)	6	Mark Pope (So.)
WR	8	Dee Wiggins (So.)	12	Jeremiah Payton (Fr.)
WR	**4**	**Jeff Thomas (Jr.)**	3	Mike Harley (Jr.)
LT	72	Tommy Kennedy (Sr.)	60	Zion Nelson (Fr.)
LG	**55**	**Navaughn Donaldson (Jr.)**	67	Zach Dykstra (So.)
C	65	Corey Gaynor (So.)		Jakai Clark (Fr.)
RG	52	Cleveland Reed Jr. (Fr.)	57	Kai-Leon Herbert (So.)
RT	**51**	**DJ Scaife Jr. (So.)**	75	Zalon'tae Hillery (So.)
TE	**9**	**Brevin Jordan (So.)**	85	Will Mallory (So.)
QB	18	Tate Martell (So.)	5	N'Kosi Perry (So.)
RB	13	DeeJay Dallas (Jr.)	1	Lorenzo Lingard (So.)

DEFENSE (6)

Returning Starters in Bold

DE	**97**	**Jonathan Garvin (Jr.)**	52	Patrick Joyner (Fr.)
DT	**93**	**Pat Bethel (Sr.)**	96	Jonathan Ford (Jr.)
DT	1	Nesta Jade Silvera (So.)		Chigozie Nnoruka (Sr.)
DE	19	Scott Patchan (Sr.)		Trevon Hill (Sr.)
WLB	**56**	**Michael Pinckney (Sr.)**		Avery Huff (Fr.)
MLB	**55**	**Shaquille Quarterman (Sr.)**	44	Bradley Jennings Jr. (So.)
SLB	**53**	**Zach McCloud (Sr.)**	30	Romeo Finley (Sr.)
CB	**2**	**Trajan Bandy (Jr.)**		Keontra Smith (Fr.)
CB	8	DJ Ivey (So.)	7	Al Blades Jr. (So.)
S	20	Robert Knowles (Sr.)	5	Amari Carter (Jr.)
S		Bubba Bolden (Jr.)	26	Gurvan Hall Jr. (So.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	21	Bubba Baxa (So.)	**KR**	4	Jeff Thomas (Jr.)
P		Louis Hedley (So.)	**PR**	13	DeeJay Dallas (Jr.)

2018 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
N'Kosi Perry	**191**	**97**	**1,091**	**13**	**6**
Malik Rosier	156	82	1,053	6	8

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD
Travis Homer	164	985	6.0	4
DeeJay Dallas	**109**	**617**	**5.7**	**6**
Malik Rosier	57	300	5.3	6
N'Kosi Perry	**61**	**169**	**2.8**	**1**

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Jeff Thomas	**35**	**563**	**16.1**	**3**
Brevin Jordan	**32**	**287**	**9.0**	**4**
Lawrence Cager	21	374	17.8	6
Mike Harley	**21**	**240**	**11.4**	**0**

KICKING: **Bubba Baxa, 9-12 FGs, 72 pts.**

TACKLES: Jaquan Johnson, 92; **Shaquille Quarterman, 82**

SACKS: Joe Jackson, 9.0

INTERCEPTIONS: 3 players tied with 3

Returning Players in **Bold**

SCOUTING THE HURRICANES

OPPOSING COACHES SIZE UP MIAMI

"One of the most unique 'first years' I think we've ever seen, between Manny (Diaz) leaving the program for Temple and then coming back to replace Mark (Richt). You've got consistency in relationships on your defense. Then you add in the new 'Transfer Portal U,' and they're going to look totally different at a lot of places in Week 1. If it works, everyone will try to copy it. … The guys we've seen coming in from the portal have made them more athletic, more competitive right away. The actual high school recruiting class wasn't good by their standards. … Defensively, keeping all three linebackers makes them good right away, add that with the new guys at defensive end, and that one from Virginia Tech is good (Trevon Hill). … Dan Enos is going to bring more of a pro-style look into Miami. I think if you're looking at Tua (Tagovailoa) and (Jalen) Hurts and what Alabama did, that's more of him adjusting to the superior talent an Alabama gets. We think you aren't going to see them go heavy on RPO. To be clear — you'll see it, or at least you should because they have guys who can do it, but they will go more pro base and build off that. … It's obviously Tate Martell's job to lose at quarterback. He's better than anyone they had while Mark Richt was there."

North Carolina Tar Heels

National Forecast: **68** • ACC Coastal Prediction: **6** • Projected Record: **4-8, 2-6 ACC**

Charlie Heck

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Mack Brown
Record at School: 69-46-1 (10 years)
Career Record: 244-122-1 (30 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Phil Longo
Defensive Coordinators: Jay Bateman, Tommy Thigpen
Location: Chapel Hill, NC
Stadium: Kenan Memorial Stadium (63,000)

KEY TAR HEELS

MICHAEL CARTER, RB Led the team with 597 rushing yards, ranked third with 25 catches and has averaged 6.4 yards per carry through his first two seasons.

DAZZ NEWSOME, WR Led the team with 44 receptions (for 506 yards and two TDs); scored on an 84-yard run and a 75-yard punt return.

CHARLIE HECK, OT Has started 22 consecutive games and helped UNC allow just 10 sacks last year. Moves from right to left tackle.

KEY LOSSES

ANTHONY RATLIFF-WILLIAMS, WR Led the team in receiving yards (689) for the second consecutive season; rushed for 83 yards and a TD.

COLE HOLCOMB, LB Led the team in tackles (105) for the third straight season, adding 8.0 tackles for a loss and four forced fumbles.

MALIK CARNEY, DE Led UNC in sacks (6.5), tackles for a loss (12.5), and forced fumbles (five) for the second season in a row.

RISING STAR

SAM HOWELL was the first big recruiting victory for Mack Brown in his return to Chapel Hill, flipping from Florida State to UNC on National Signing Day. Ranked among the nation's top quarterback recruits, Howell enrolled in the spring and is competing to start as a freshman.

North Carolina plummeted to 2–9 in 2018, finished in last place in the ACC's Coastal Division for the second year in a row and has three wins in its last 24 games against FBS competition. Yet the excitement around the program is high, thanks to the return of an old friend.

Mack Brown is back to rebuild UNC's program for the second time. He succeeded in his first effort, leading the Tar Heels to marks of 10–2 and 11–1 in 1996-97 before leaving for Texas. After five years away from coaching, he's trying to put UNC's program back where he left it more than two decades ago: among the nation's elite. Brown faces a big challenge, but he made quick progress by jump-starting UNC's recruiting efforts and igniting the fan base. Now, he's looking for immediate on-field success.

"I know more than I did last time I was here, and I'm more mature than I was the last time I was here," Brown says. "We want to win, and we want to win in the opener. That's just part of who we are."

OFFENSE Brown wants to implement the Air Raid offense popularized by Hal Mumme and Mike Leach, and he hired Ole Miss offensive coordinator Phil Longo to run it. UNC's new motto, "Don't Blink," fits with the up-tempo system that the players were accustomed to under former coach Larry Fedora.

"It definitely feels fast," senior left tackle Charlie Heck says. "We were a tempo offense last year, and we're going to keep on improving that this year."

UNC has a three-player competition at quarterback after Chazz Surratt's conversion to linebacker, with highly touted recruit Sam Howell joining redshirt freshmen Cade Fortin and Jace Ruder. Fortin and Ruder flashed dual-threat ability in limited action a year ago, but both got injured. Howell, Fortin and Ruder spent the spring learning the offense, and the competition will crank up during training camp.

The strength of UNC's offense is at running back, where Michael Carter and Antonio Williams form a solid 1-2 punch. Carter's knack for breaking long runs and Williams' bruising style complement each other, and both players should get opportunities despite the Air Raid's pass-happy reputation. Brown insists that he wants to run the ball effectively, but that will depend on UNC's offensive line. Heck, a starter the last two years at right tackle, has moved to left tackle to anchor the unit. Nick Polino will move from left guard to center, and the Tar Heels have intriguing but unproven players at the other spots.

UNC's receivers were inconsistent during the spring, dropping too many passes for Brown's liking. The group is inexperienced, but it features plenty of speed. Dazz Newsome is back after leading the team with 44 catches a year ago, and Dyami Brown has breakout potential.

DEFENSE New defensive coordinator Jay Bateman excelled at Army with lesser talent. He'll employ an attacking system with multiple looks, bouncing between 3-4 and 4-3 alignments while sending blitzers from all angles.

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	vs. South Carolina #
Sept.	7	Miami
Sept.	12	at Wake Forest
Sept.	21	Appalachian State
Sept.	28	Clemson
Oct.	5	at Georgia Tech
Oct.	19	at Virginia Tech
Oct.	26	Duke
Nov.	2	Virginia
Nov.	14	at Pittsburgh
Nov.	23	Mercer
Nov.	30	at NC State

#Charlotte

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 2-9, 1-7 ACC

Sept.	1	at California	L	17-24
Sept.	8	at East Carolina	L	19-41
Sept.	22	Pittsburgh	W	38-35
Sept.	27	at Miami (Fla.)	L	10-47
Oct.	13	Virginia Tech	L	19-22
Oct.	20	at Syracuse (ot)	L	37-40
Oct.	27	at Virginia	L	21-31
Nov.	3	Georgia Tech	L	28-38
Nov.	10	at Duke	L	35-42
Nov.	17	Western Carolina	W	49-26
Nov.	24	NC State (ot)	L	28-34

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	ACC	NATIONAL
Scoring	27.4 ppg	11	78
Rushing	193.0 ypg	6	44
Passing	249.1 ypg	6	48
Total	442.1 ypg	5	31
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**ACC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	34.5 ppg	13	106
Rushing	218.8 ypg	13	111
Passing	228.8 ypg	9	64
Total	447.6 ypg	12	105
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**ACC**	**NATIONAL**
-6	-0.55	12	112

2019 RECRUITS

1. Sam Howell, QB, Monroe, NC
2. Khafre Brown, WR, Charlotte, NC
3. Eugene Asante, LB, Chantilly, VA
4. Triston Miller, OT, Charlotte, NC
5. Wisdom Asaboro, DT, Charlotte, NC
6. Emery Simmons, WR, Parkton, NC
7. Josh Henderson, RB, Pennington, NJ
8. Giovanni Biggers, S, Columbia, MD
9. Don Chapman, S, San Diego, CA
10. Ty Murray, OG, Carrollton, GA
11. Khadry Jackson, LB, Windermere, FL
12. Welton Spottsville, WR, Havelock, NC
13. Asim Richards, OT, Philadelphia, PA
14. Tomari Fox, DE, Lawrenceville, GA
15. Kamari Morales, TE, Tallahassee, FL
16. Kevin Hester, DE, Kennesaw, GA
17. Storm Duck, CB, Boiling Springs, SC
18. Wyatt Tunall, OT, Chester, SC
19. Raymond Vohasek, DE, McHenry, IL*
20. Kristian Varner, DE, Hiram, GA
21. Justin Olson, WR, Huntersville, NC
22. Obi Egbuna, CB, Charlotte, NC
23. Ben Kiernan, P, Raleigh, NC
24. Drew Little, LS, Richfield, NC

*junior college transfer

Recruits ranked according to the 247SportsComposite

Peter Brouillet

ADVANCED STATS

5 Factors: College Football's Most Important Stats

Field Position[1]		Rank
Offense	28.8	97
Defense	31.9	113
Margin	-3.1	105

Efficiency[2]		Rank
Offense	41.1%	80
Defense	42.5%	78
Margin	-1.4%	84

Explosiveness[3]		Rank
Offense	6.0	52
Defense	6.0	94
Margin	0.0	79

Finishing Drives[4]		Rank
Offense	3.8	120
Defense	4.7	86
Margin	-0.9	120

Adjusted TO Margin[5]		Rank
Projected	-3.0	95
Actual	-6	107
Margin	-3.0	97

KEY: **1**-Average starting field position by yard line; **2**-Rate of successful plays (gaining 50% of necessary yards on 1st down, 70% on 2nd down, 100% on 3rd down); **3**-Explosiveness=yards per play; **4**-Points per trip inside 40-yard line; **5**-TO margin accounting for "luck" • Advanced stats provided by Bill Connelly of SB Nation

NUMBERS TO KNOW

-0.9

UNC self-destructed in the red zone in 2018. The Heels averaged just 3.8 points per scoring opportunity (first downs inside the opponent's 40) and allowed opponents 4.7 points per trip. The resulting margin of minus-0.9 points per trip ranked 120th in FBS and second worst in the ACC.

30+

You were likely to see some big plays in UNC games last year: The Heels averaged 2.9 gains per game of 30-plus yards (18th in FBS) and allowed 2.5 (93rd).

2.5

UNC allowed just a 2.5 percent sack rate in 2018, fifth best in FBS. Unfortunately, there were still plenty of negative plays coming from the ground game: The Heels suffered a 23.2 percent stuff rate (run stops at or behind the line), 114th.

"There's just more energy really," defensive end Tomon Fox says. "Everybody is ready for their new role, they're ready for what we're about to do here. They're just excited for it."

The new staff has identified Fox and linebacker Dominique Ross as UNC's top pass rushers and will feature the duo in passing situations. Seniors Aaron Crawford and Jason Strowbridge are assets on the interior line, and freshman defensive tackle Brant Lawless was impressive during the spring.

Linebacker is a concern after the graduation of Cole Holcomb, the team's leading tackler for the last three seasons. Senior Jonathan Smith, Holcomb's heir apparent, missed the spring because of academics and has yet to become a force. Ross will lead the group, but the team needs someone else to emerge.

In the secondary, safety Myles Dorn and cornerback Patrice Rene return after tying for the team lead with two interceptions last season. The Tar Heels lost three cornerbacks during the spring, so depth is a question. Nickel back Trey Morrison, a reliable tackler last season as a freshman, should be an effective blitzer from his position opposite slot receivers.

SPECIALISTS The kicking game is a priority for Brown, but it will be a big uncertainty this season. UNC must replace its placekicker and punter, and performances were inconsistent at both positions during the spring. Sophomore Noah Ruggles has some experience, making two extra points last season. Newsome is a dangerous punt returner, which he showed on a 75-yard touchdown at Syracuse last year.

FINAL ANALYSIS UNC plays in the ACC's Coastal Division, where the separation between programs is small and the uncertainty in predicting their performance is large, so the team has a chance to rebound. The keys are finding a quarterback who can move the ball without turning it over, reducing penalties and making more big plays on defense. While the Tar Heels aren't good enough to challenge for ACC supremacy, they have more talent than their recent record would suggest. UNC went 2–8 in games decided by seven points or fewer the last two years, indicating that small improvements could make a big difference.

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (4)

WR	21	Dyami Brown (So.)	85	Roscoe Johnson (Jr.)
WR	19	Dazz Newsome (Jr.)	9	Corey Bell Jr. (Sr.)
WR	88	Beau Corrales (Jr.)	4	Rontavius Groves (Jr.)
LT	**67**	**Charlie Heck (Sr.)**	66	Tobechi Nwokeji (So.)
LG	63	Ed Montilus (Fr.)	**56**	**Billy Ross (So.)**
C	**58**	**Nick Polino (Sr.)**	68	Brian Anderson (So.)
RG	75	Joshua Ezeudu (Fr.)	76	William Barnes (Fr.)
RT	74	Jordan Tucker (So.)	73	Marcus McKethan (So.)
TE	86	Carl Tucker (Sr.)	80	Jake Bargas (Sr.)
QB	7	Sam Howell (Fr.)	6	Cade Fortin (Fr.)
RB	8	Michael Carter (Jr.)	**24**	**Antonio Williams (Sr.)**

DEFENSE (6)

Returning Starters in Bold

NG	92	Aaron Crawford (Sr.)	52	Jahlil Taylor (Fr.)
NT	**55**	**Jason Strowbridge (Sr.)**	90	Xach Gill (So.)
DE	12	**Tomon Fox (Jr.)**	33	Allen Cater (Sr.)
ILB	7	Jonathan Smith (Sr.)	44	Jeremiah Gemmel (So.)
ILB	**3**	**Dominique Ross (Sr.)**	30	Matthew Flint (Fr.)
OLB	17	Chris Collins (So.)	42	Tyrone Hopper (Jr.)
CB	35	Greg Ross (Jr.)	31	Tre Shaw (So.)
CB	**5**	**Patrice Rene (Sr.)**	29	Storm Duck (Fr.)
NB	**27**	**Trey Morrison (So.)**	15	DeAndre Hollins (So.)
FS	**1**	**Myles Dorn (Sr.)**	6	Bryson Richardson (So.)
SS	11	Myles Wolfolk (Jr.)	16	D.J. Ford (Jr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	97	Noah Ruggles (So.)	KR	25	Javonte Williams (So.)
P		Ben Kiernan (Fr.)	PR	19	Dazz Newsome (Jr.)

2018 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Nathan Elliott	325	201	2,169	11	9
Cade Fortin	**65**	**32**	**388**	**1**	**1**

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD
Michael Carter	**84**	**597**	**7.1**	**2**
Antonio Williams	**91**	**504**	**5.5**	**5**
Jordon Brown	**81**	**347**	**4.3**	**3**
Javonte Williams	**43**	**224**	**5.2**	**5**

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Dazz Newsome	**44**	**506**	**11.5**	**2**
Anthony Ratliff-Williams	42	689	16.4	2
Michael Carter	**25**	**135**	**5.4**	**1**
Beau Corrales	**18**	**220**	**12.2**	**2**

KICKING: Freeman Jones, 18-28 FGs, 85 pts.

TACKLES: Cole Holcomb, 105; J.K. Britt, 64

SACKS: Malik Carney, 6.5

INTERCEPTIONS: **Myles Dorn, 2; Patrice Rene, 2**

Returning Players in **Bold**

SCOUTING THE TAR HEELS

OPPOSING COACHES SIZE UP NORTH CAROLINA

"Larry Fedora was really close to turning it around, but he might have lost the locker room in the process. Mack (Brown) is going to be the polar opposite. Culture guy, executive style. He's got some momentum already in recruiting from what we can tell. They're going about taking the lead back in the state from NC State. … The interesting thing to watch is what level of involvement Mack is going to have, honestly. What kind of energy level is there over a long period of time, when you're grinding? They just hired him back, but everyone in coaching assumes he's there to set up something to transition to the next guy. He can't be there too long. … The coordinator hires are interesting together. Jay Bateman is a great defensive mind, but he came from Army where they're limiting opponents' possessions as a rule. Now you have Phil Longo, who was going as fast as possible at Ole Miss. Longo has a lot of work to do; they need to settle on a QB early, and they don't have the NFL roster of wideouts Ole Miss did. They need to find a big playmaker there. … They have some really solid guys on defense, but they're a little undersized. Good but not special all over the place — that's been their story for the last few years on that side of the ball. … There's a lot of energy in recruiting. Dre Bly is a great add for recruiting."

Pittsburgh **Panthers**

National Forecast: **54** • ACC Coastal Prediction: **4** • Projected Record: **6-6, 4-4 ACC**

Kenny Pickett

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Pat Narduzzi
Record at School: 28-24 (4 years)
Career Record: 28-24 (4 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Mark Whipple
Defensive Coordinator: Randy Bates
Location: Pittsburgh, PA
Stadium: Heinz Field (68,400)

KEY PANTHERS

KENNY PICKETT, QB Looks to improve on a season in which he completed just 58 percent of his passes for 1,969 yards with 12 touchdowns and six interceptions.

MAURICE FFRENCH, WR/KR Not only returned two kickoffs for touchdowns, but also finished with 35 catches for 515 yards with six scores.

DAMAR HAMLIN, DB Instinctive and athletic, registered 90 tackles and two interceptions.

KEY LOSSES

QADREE OLLISON, RB Rushed for 1,000-plus yards as a freshman and senior at Pitt, with only 127 as a sophomore and 398 as a junior.

DARRIN HALL, RB The other half of a two-headed backfield monster ran for 1,144 yards with 10 scores on a healthy 7.5-yard average.

OLUWASEUN IDOWU, LB Ranked second on the team with 82 tackles, including 9.5 for a loss.

RISING STAR

In his first career game, running back **V'LIQUE CARTER**, a converted defensive back, rushed for 137 yards and two TDs on only seven carries against Duke. Carter ran the ball only 18 more times for 65 yards in his final six games. The sophomore should receive more opportunities in '19.

At first glance, the 2018 season could be viewed as unremarkable for a Pittsburgh team that finished .500.

But a deeper look reveals that the Panthers won their first ACC Coastal Division championship, played in the conference title game and briefly broke into the national rankings after a one-year hiatus. Progress? Yes. Unfinished business? No doubt.

"Our goal is to win football games," says coach Pat Narduzzi, entering his fifth season. "Obviously, we got to a championship game, but we still would like to win them all."

Signed through 2024, Narduzzi is the longest-tenured Panthers coach since Dave Wannstedt from 2005-10. Three coaches followed Wannstedt — one lasted two weeks, another one year and another three years — before Narduzzi delivered stability. His challenge in Year 5 is replacing two 1,000-yard rushers, four offensive linemen and 12 starters. The hope is for quarterback Kenny Pickett to show marked improvement, and for the defense to build on a solid finish.

OFFENSE Dissatisfied by his team's lack of production (26 total points in its final three games), Narduzzi fired coordinator Shawn Watson and replaced him with former University of Massachusetts head coach Mark Whipple. The hope is for Whipple, who once mentored a young Ben Roethlisberger with the Steelers, to be a quarterback whisperer to Pickett. In his first season as a starter, Pickett steered an offense that ranked 121st nationally in passing yards (141.8 ypg), 98th in total offense (369.7 ypg) and 94th in points (25.6 ppg). In his final three games, he threw for a combined 274 yards and zero TDs. He finished with 1,969 yards, 12 touchdowns, six interceptions, 33 sacks and a 58.1 completion percentage.

This area must improve dramatically, particularly with the departures of 1,000-yard running backs Qadree Ollison and Darrin Hall. Whipple placed a large emphasis on throwing the ball in the spring, prompting wideout Aaron Matthews to say, "This is practice nine, and I feel like I have more touches than I had the past three years."

Senior Maurice Ffrench displayed intriguing potential last season, finishing with 35 receptions for 515 yards and six TDs. Those totals included TD catches of 70, 58 and 50 yards. Junior Taysir Mack, who averaged 22.3 yards on 25 catches, could benefit from Whipple's presence.

Narduzzi-led teams have always produced solid run games, and it will be up to relatively untested junior A.J. Davis (134 yards on 32 carries in '18) and sophomore Todd Sibley Jr. to set the tempo early. Mychale Salahuddin, the top recruit of '18, and V'Lique Carter could be factors as the season progresses. Carter ran for 202 yards last season, including 137 and two touchdowns on only seven carries versus Duke.

"Don't believe, 'Air Narduzzi,'" the Pittsburgh coach says. "We're going to run the ball."

On the line, Michigan graduate transfer Nolan Ulizio and third-year starting center Jimmy Morrissey must set the standard for what will be an inexperienced unit.

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	Virginia
Sept.	7	Ohio
Sept.	14	at Penn State
Sept.	21	UCF
Sept.	28	Delaware
Oct.	5	at Duke
Oct.	18	at Syracuse
Oct.	26	Miami
Nov.	2	at Georgia Tech
Nov.	14	North Carolina
Nov.	23	at Virginia Tech
Nov.	30	Boston College

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 7-7, 6-2 ACC

Sept.	1	Albany		W	33-7
Sept.	8	Penn State		L	6-51
Sept.	15	Georgia Tech		W	24-19
Sept.	22	at North Carolina		L	35-38
Sept.	29	at UCF		L	14-45
Oct.	6	Syracuse	(ot)	W	44-37
Oct.	13	at Notre Dame		L	14-19
Oct.	27	Duke		W	54-45
Nov.	2	at Virginia		W	23-13
Nov.	10	Virginia Tech		W	52-22
Nov.	17	at Wake Forest		W	34-13
Nov.	24	at Miami (Fla.)		L	3-24
Dec.	1	vs. Clemson #		L	10-42
Dec.	31	vs. Stanford %		L	13-14

#Charlotte %Sun Bowl

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	ACC	NATIONAL
Scoring	25.6 ppg	12	94
Rushing	227.9 ypg	3	18
Passing	141.8 ypg	13	121
Total	369.7 ypg	11	98
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**ACC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	27.8 ppg	8	75
Rushing	178.3 ypg	9	80
Passing	209.3 ypg	6	46
Total	387.6 ypg	5	59
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**ACC**	**NATIONAL**
+2	+0.14	7	56

2019 RECRUITS

1. Davis Beville, QB, Greenville, SC
2. Daniel Carter, RB, Margate, FL
3. Brandon Hill, S, Apopka, FL
4. Matt Goncalves, OT, Manorville, NY
5. Brandon George, LB, Bernville, PA
6. Jason Collier, TE, Westville, NJ
7. Calijah Kancey, DT, Miami, FL
8. Vincent Davis, RB, Fort Lauderdale, FL
9. Bryce Nelms, DE, West Orange, NJ
10. Deandre Jules, DE, Germantown, MD
11. Will Gipson, WR, Aliquippa, PA
12. Bam Brima, DE, Williamsport, PA
13. Liam Dick, OT, Milton, ON
14. Kyi Wright, LB, Farrell, PA
15. Leslie Smith, LB, Miami, FL
16. A.J. Woods, DB, Germantown, MD
17. Jared Wayne, WR, Peterborough, ON
18. Nate Temple, DE, Abbeville, SC
19. SirVocea Dennis, LB, Syracuse, NY

Recruits ranked according to the 247SportsComposite

Bruce Schwartzman

ADVANCED STATS

5 Factors: College Football's Most Important Stats

Field Position[1]		Rank
Offense	27.0	117
Defense	30.8	101
Margin	-3.8	111

Efficiency[2]		Rank
Offense	41.8%	72
Defense	41.2%	66
Margin	+0.6%	70

Explosiveness[3]		Rank
Offense	5.8	61
Defense	5.8	79
Margin	0.0	78

Finishing Drives[4]		Rank
Offense	4.7	60
Defense	4.5	61
Margin	+0.2	58

Adjusted TO Margin[5]		Rank
Projected	7.6	11
Actual	2	52
Margin	-5.6	117

KEY: **1**-Average starting field position by yard line; **2**-Rate of successful plays (gaining 50% of necessary yards on 1st down, 70% on 2nd down, 100% on 3rd down); **3**-Explosiveness=yards per play; **4**-Points per trip inside 40-yard line; **5**-TO margin accounting for "luck" • Advanced stats provided by Bill Connelly of SB Nation

NUMBERS TO KNOW

30.9

Pitt's offense averaged one snap every 30.9 seconds in 2018, the third-slowest tempo and the slowest of all power conference teams by nearly a full second. When you're operating much more slowly than offenses like Michigan or Georgia Tech, you're slow.

27.7/2.4

The Pitt run game was both efficient and explosive: The Panthers ranked 22nd in rushing success rate (percentage of plays that gained at least 50 percent of necessary yardage on first down, 70 percent on second, or 100 percent on third or fourth), at 27.7 percent, and 15th in rushes per game of 20-plus yards, with 2.4.

2.6

Pitt's defense gave a lot of those big plays back, though. Opponents averaged 2.6 gains per game of 30-plus yards (101st in FBS).

DEFENSE The final statistics do not tell the entire story of the 2018 Pittsburgh defense. Sure, there were forgettable moments, but the Panthers also held Virginia, Virginia Tech and Wake Forest to a combined 48 points during a late-season surge. And, in their final six games, opponents averaged only 323 yards.

Safety Damar Hamlin and cornerback Dane Jackson, both honorable mention All-ACC picks, offer senior leadership in the secondary. Hamlin led with 90 tackles and two interceptions in '18. Jackson finished with a team-high 14 pass break-ups and four forced fumbles. This duo could be joined in the secondary by junior corner Jason Pinnock (two interceptions) and sophomore safety Paris Ford, a highly regarded recruit who will attempt to live up to his billing.

The linebacking corps lost a trio that combined for 171 tackles and 20.5 tackles for a loss. Look for junior Elias Reynolds, who started seven games in the middle, to be the catalyst for this new wave of starters. The junior registered 49 tackles, including 12 versus Duke. Converted safety Phil Campbell III and 2018 backups Saleem Brightwell (14 games), Chase Pine (14), and Cam Bright (14) will share playing time.

At end, junior Rashad Weaver is back after leading Pittsburgh in sacks (6.5) and tackles for a loss (14). Oft-injured junior tackle Keyshon Camp led the interior line with 18 quarterback pressures and two sacks in just seven games.

SPECIALISTS Everyone returns, including placekicker Alex Kessman (24 career field goals), punter Kirk Christodoulou (19 punts inside the 20) and standout returner Ffrench (two kickoff returns for touchdowns).

FINAL ANALYSIS Where do the Panthers go from here? When, if ever, will the breakthrough occur? Pittsburgh has not finished in the end-of-season top 25 in 10 years and last recorded double-digit wins in 2009. Narduzzi won eight games in each of his first two seasons, but those totals shrunk to five and seven in 2017 and '18, respectively.

This Pittsburgh team is made up entirely of Narduzzi recruits. And while the roster includes talent, Pittsburgh still needs more time to break into the upper echelon of college football and into a top-end bowl game.

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (5)

WR	11	**Taysir Mack (Jr.)**	6	**Aaron Mathews (Sr.)**
WR	2	**Maurice Ffrench (Sr.)**	88	Dontavius Butler-Jenkins (So.)
WR	5	Tre Tipton (Sr.)	18	Shocky Jacques-Louis (So.)
LT	77	Carter Warren (So.)	59	Carson Van Lynn (So.)
LG	71	Bryce Hargrove (Jr.)	56	Brandon Ford (Jr.)
C	67	**Jimmy Morrissey (Jr.)**	53	Jake Kradel (Fr.)
RG	55	Chase Brown (Sr.)	54	Rashad Wheeler (Jr.)
RT		Nolan Ulizio (Sr.)	57	Gabe Houy (So.)
TE	84	Grant Carrigan (So.)	10	Will Gragg (Sr.)
QB	8	**Kenny Pickett (Jr.)**	12	Nick Patti (Fr.)
RB	21	A.J. Davis (Jr.)	23	Todd Sibley Jr. (So.)

DEFENSE (5)

Returning Starters in Bold

DE	17	**Rashad Weaver (Jr.)**	6	John Morgan (Fr.)
DT	34	**Amir Watts (Sr.)**	95	Devin Danielson (Fr.)
DT	97	Jaylen Twyman (So.)	10	Keyshon Camp (Jr.)
DE	91	Patrick Jones II (Jr.)	5	Deslin Alexandre (So.)
OLB	36	Chase Pine (Jr.)	47	Kyle Nunn (So.)
MLB	44	**Elias Reynolds (Jr.)**	9	Saleem Brightwell (Sr.)
OLB	24	Phil Campbell III (Jr.)	38	Cam Bright (So.)
CB	11	**Dane Jackson (Sr.)**	21	Demarri Mathis (Jr.)
CB	15	Jason Pinnock (Jr.)	14	Marquis Williams (Fr.)
SS	12	Paris Ford (So.)	27	Bricen Garner (Jr.)
FS	3	**Damar Hamlin (Sr.)**	7	Jazzee Stocker (Sr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	97	Alex Kessman (Jr.)	KR	2	Maurice Ffrench (Sr.)
P	98	Kirk Christodoulou (So.)	PR	2	Maurice Ffrench (Sr.)

2018 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Kenny Pickett	**310**	**180**	**1,969**	**12**	**6**
Jeff George Jr.	**3**	**1**	**1**	**0**	**0**

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD
Qadree Ollison	194	1,213	6.3	11
Darrin Hall	153	1,144	7.5	10
Kenny Pickett	**117**	**220**	**1.9**	**3**
V'Lique Carter	**25**	**202**	**8.1**	**2**

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Rafael Araujo-Lopes	37	380	10.3	4
Maurice Ffrench	**35**	**515**	**14.7**	**6**
Taysir Mack	**25**	**557**	**22.3**	**1**
Aaron Matthews	**9**	**120**	**13.3**	**0**

KICKING: **Alex Kessman, 13-17 FGs, 79 pts.**

TACKLES: **Damar Hamlin, 90**; Oluwaseun Idowu, 82

SACKS: **Rashad Weaver, 6.5**

INTERCEPTIONS: **Damar Hamlin, 2; Jason Pinnock, 2**

Returning Players in **Bold**

SCOUTING THE PANTHERS

OPPOSING COACHES SIZE UP PITTSBURGH

"The division title was a great thing for Pat (Narduzzi), but it probably doesn't change much for the program. Year in and year out you always see the same thing from these guys — they reflect Narduzzi in how they're physical and disciplined and really mean working against you, but it's always a question of how far their talent can take them. It's not about a limitation of their culture or their play calling. It's really all about what kind of talent they can get. They're losing a lot of guys heading into this season, and the crowning achievement for that group was a 7–7 run. That's just the reality of the program right now. … Right away, you notice they need to replace their backfield. Qadree Ollison is a guy they'll miss; he will likely end up on an NFL roster. Next they're going to have to find a whole new offensive line. And they really lived on pounding it, on wearing you down. When they were clicking, it was because they could beat you up running. They were a one-dimensional offense after Matt Canada left, and you can't do that without being really, really talented at that one thing. … Mark Whipple is a really great offensive mind. They don't have a ton of talent to hand him, but the guy is coming from UMass. … They're going to have to ugly it up with their defense to stay around .500 this year."

Virginia **Cavaliers**

National Forecast: **25** • ACC Coastal Prediction: **1** • Projected Record: **9-4, 6-2 ACC**

Bryce Perkins

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Bronco Mendenhall
Record at School: 16-22 (3 years)
Career Record: 115-65 (14 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Robert Anae
Defensive Coordinators: Nick Howell, Kelly Poppinga
Location: Charlottesville, VA
Stadium: Scott Stadium (61,500)

KEY CAVALIERS

BRYCE PERKINS, QB Transformed the Virginia offense with his dual-threat ability, finishing third in the league in total offense.

BRYCE HALL, CB Hall led the nation in pass break-ups in 2018 and will be one of the conference's top cover corners this season.

JORDAN MACK, LB An emerging star at inside linebacker, Mack missed four games with an injury but still finished second on the team with 66 tackles.

KEY LOSSES

OLAMIDE ZACCHEAUS, WR Zaccheaus was Virginia's most dynamic offensive weapon, a productive player and popular team leader.

JORDAN ELLIS, RB The Cavaliers' workhorse running back carried the ball 430 times the past two seasons.

JUAN THORNHILL, S Arguably the best athlete in the program, Thornhill upped his physical play and still led the team with six interceptions.

RISING STAR

Outside linebacker **NOAH TAYLOR** played in nine games last season as a true freshman, mostly on special teams. But by the time Virginia beat South Carolina in the Belk Bowl, the 6'5", 205-pound Taylor had earned the coaches' confidence that he could contribute defensively.

Virginia, coming off its most wins since 2011, hopes to continue its rapid ascent under coach Bronco Mendenhall, who has guided the Cavaliers to back-to-back bowl appearances for the first time since 2004 and 2005.

This season, UVA expects to have a loaded defense, a year after finishing third in the ACC in scoring defense, holding opponents to 20.1 points per game. Offensively, the Cavaliers will need to replace some key pieces, but they return one of the conference's rising stars in quarterback Bryce Perkins.

Building Virginia into a consistent postseason participant was one of Mendenhall's main goals when he arrived in Charlottesville. He guided BYU to 11 straight bowl games before taking over at UVA. He appears on his way to accomplishing that objective. He also has stated his desire to beat rival Virginia Tech and to win an ACC Coastal Division title.

Last season, Virginia came painfully close to both, hanging in the title race until late in the season and losing to the Hokies — for the 15th straight time — when Perkins fumbled near the goal line at the end of regulation. Tech won 34–31 in overtime. This year, UVA has its sights set on finishing both those tasks.

OFFENSE Two of the biggest weapons Virginia had on offense are gone. Jordan Ellis, a 1,000-yard rusher, and first-team All-ACC wide receiver Olamide Zaccheaus were both seniors last season, and replacing them won't be easy. But the Cavaliers return Perkins, the quarterback who transformed the offense last season. He ranked third in the ACC in total offense, accounting for 277.2 yards per game. He was responsible for 34 touchdowns, throwing for 25, tied for the second most in the league, and rushing for nine more.

Perkins, coming off finger surgery, should be every bit the dynamic playmaker and team leader he proved to be last year, his first season in Charlottesville. The question will be what kind of pieces can UVA put around him to keep the offense moving forward.

Senior Joe Reed, also an explosive kick returner, could be poised for a breakout season as a pass catcher. Senior Hasise Dubois was productive last year, and junior Terrell Jana and sophomores Tavares Kelly and Billy Kemp could all be in line for major steps forward this season.

At running back, Ellis has been the team's workhorse the past two years. UVA is hoping that junior PK Kier can step into that role, although in the spring, he was pushed by sophomore Wayne Taulapapa.

Of course, none of that will matter if Virginia can't get its offensive line sorted out. Two seniors — Marcus Applefield and Jake Fieler — are gone, as is junior guard R.J. Proctor, who left the program. Up front, the Cavaliers will count on experienced but young players such as Dillon Reinkensmeyer, Chris Glaser and Ryan Nelson.

DEFENSE As it was last season, Virginia appears stacked with talent at linebacker and in the secondary but could again be thin on the defensive line. The Cavaliers

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	at Pittsburgh
Sept.	6	William & Mary
Sept.	14	Florida State
Sept.	21	Old Dominion
Sept.	28	at Notre Dame
Oct.	11	at Miami
Oct.	19	Duke
Oct.	26	at Louisville
Nov.	2	at North Carolina
Nov.	9	Georgia Tech
Nov.	23	Liberty
Nov.	29	Virginia Tech

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 8-5, 4-4 ACC

Sept.	1	Richmond	W	42-13
Sept.	8	at Indiana	L	16-20
Sept.	15	vs. Ohio #	W	45-31
Sept.	22	Louisville	W	27-3
Sept.	29	at NC State	L	21-35
Oct.	13	Miami (Fla.)	W	16-13
Oct.	20	at Duke	W	28-14
Oct.	27	North Carolina	W	31-21
Nov.	2	Pittsburgh	L	13-23
Nov.	10	Liberty	W	45-24
Nov.	17	at Georgia Tech (ot)	L	27-30
Nov.	23	at Virginia Tech (ot)	L	31-34
Dec.	29	vs. South Carolina %	W	28-0

#Nashville %Belk Bowl

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	ACC	NATIONAL
Scoring	28.5 ppg	10	68
Rushing	173.2 ypg	10	60
Passing	211.6 ypg	10	87
Total	384.8 ypg	10	82
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**ACC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	20.1 ppg	3	21
Rushing	147.5 ypg	4	47
Passing	183.0 ypg	2	16
Total	330.5 ypg	3	20
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**ACC**	**NATIONAL**
+2	+0.15	6	54

2019 RECRUITS

1. Jowon Briggs, DT, Cincinnati, OH
2. Jeffrey M'ba, DT, Oakdale, CT
3. Hunter Stewart, LB, Alexandria, VA
4. Nick Jackson, LB, Atlanta, GA
5. Ben Smiley, DT, Chesapeake, VA
6. Ja'Quay Hubbard, OT, Sharpsville, PA
7. Dontayvion Wicks, WR, Plaquemine, LA
8. Seneca Milledge, RB, Fort Myers, FL
9. Mike Hollins, RB, Baton Rouge, LA
10. D'Sean Perry, LB, Miami, FL
11. Nathaniel Beal, WR, Houston, TX
12. Antonio Clary, DB, Jacksonville, FL
13. Fentrell Cypress, CB, Rock Hill, SC
14. Josh Ahern, ILB, Burke, VA
15. Kariem Al Soufi, OG, Germany
16. Zachary Teter, OT, Lakeland, FL
17. Major Williams, CB, Fort Myers, FL
18. Dorien Goddard, WR, Greeneville, TN
19. Luke Wentz, QB, Germany
20. Jonathan Leech, OT, Hoschton, GA
21. Chayce Chalmers, S, Gainesville, VA
22. RJ Harvey, QB, Orlando, FL
23. Jairus Satiu, LB, Lehi, UT
24. Tenyeh Dixon, CB, Washington, DC

Recruits ranked according to the 247SportsComposite

Walter G. Arce Sr.

ADVANCED STATS

5 Factors: College Football's Most Important Stats

Field Position[1]		Rank
Offense	33.6	7
Defense	28.1	34
Margin	**+5.5**	**11**

Efficiency[2]		Rank
Offense	44.4%	38
Defense	37.2%	21
Margin	**+7.2%**	**20**

Explosiveness[3]		Rank
Offense	5.8	59
Defense	5.3	44
Margin	**+0.5**	**40**

Finishing Drives[4]		Rank
Offense	4.6	74
Defense	4.0	25
Margin	**+0.6**	**29**

Adjusted TO Margin[5]		Rank
Projected	6.0	17
Actual	2	52
Margin	**-4.0**	**105**

KEY: 1-Average starting field position by yard line; **2**-Rate of successful plays (gaining 50% of necessary yards on 1st down, 70% on 2nd down, 100% on 3rd down); **3**-Explosiveness=yards per play; **4**-Points per trip inside 40-yard line; **5**-TO margin accounting for "luck" • Advanced stats provided by Bill Connelly of SB Nation

NUMBERS TO KNOW

14.3

Virginia's scoring margin improved by 14.3 points per game in 2018, from minus-5.9 in 2017 to plus-8.4. That was the eighth-largest improvement in the country and second largest in the ACC behind Syracuse.

48

An active secondary: Virginia opponents threw 177 incompletions in 2018, and 48 percent of them were either intercepted or broken up by Cavalier defenders. That was the highest percentage in FBS.

+7.2

The Cavaliers' offense enjoyed a success rate (percentage of plays that gained at least 50 percent of necessary yardage on first down, 70 percent on second, or 100 percent on third or fourth) of 44.4 percent in 2018, and the defense allowed 37.2 percent. The plus-7.2 percent margin was second best in the ACC.

do lose a pair of key contributors at linebacker and safety in Chris Peace and Juan Thornhill, but they look to have capable replacements ready to step into those spots.

Outside linebacker Charles Snowden, a junior, and inside backer Jordan Mack, a senior, are emerging stars, and they highlight that position group. But they're far from alone. Juniors Zane Zandier and Robert Snyder both proved capable on the inside last season, and junior Elliott Brown and sophomore Noah Taylor look poised to follow Snowden's lead on the outside.

Virginia got a major lift in the secondary when cornerback Bryce Hall decided to return for his senior year. That takes some of the sting out of losing Thornhill and cornerback Tim Harris, a senior last season. Juniors Joey Blount and Brenton Nelson give UVA one of the better safety tandems in the ACC. The Cavaliers will need someone to emerge as the second corner, opposite Hall.

SPECIALISTS Reed gives Virginia one of the ACC's best kick returners, an explosive weapon capable of giving the offense great field position — if opposing teams kick to him. They didn't do that often in 2018. Still, Reed averaged 27.2 yards per return and took one back 90 yards for a touchdown. That's the good news. The trouble? UVA must replace an excellent punter in Lester Coleman, and the Cavs have been shaky on field goals the past two seasons. Juniors Brian Delaney and A.J. Mejia will compete for that spot. Delaney took over last season and went 12-for-16.

FINAL ANALYSIS Mendenhall has guided the Virginia program from the basement of the ACC to a level of respectability. Maintaining that new status will be challenging enough, but the Cavaliers have designs on moving up even more. A Coastal Division title? That may be challenge, with UVA still rebuilding its offensive and defensive lines, though the Coastal remains as ripe as ever for the taking, with Miami, Georgia Tech and North Carolina all debuting new coaches in 2019.

Three winnable nonconference games in William & Mary, Old Dominion and Liberty should position Virginia for another bowl appearance. What UVA does in conference play could have Mendenhall positioned for another step forward.

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (6)

WR	**8**	**Hasise Dubois (Sr.)**	80	Billy Kemp (So.)
WR	**2**	**Joe Reed (Sr.)**	86	Ugo Obasi (So.)
WR	84	Terrell Jana (Jr.)	27	Tavares Kelly (So.)
LT	**54**	**Ryan Nelson (So.)**	70	Bobby Haskins (So.)
LG	**69**	**Chris Glaser (Jr.)**		Joe Bissinger (Fr.)
C		Victor Oluwatimi (So.)	63	Tyler Fannin (So.)
RG	**79**	**Dillon Reinkensmeyer (Jr.)**	67	Derek Devine (Fr.)
RT		Alex Gellerstedt (Sr.)	72	Ryan Swoboda (So.)
TE	44	Tanner Cowley (Sr.)		Christian Baumgardner (Jr.)
QB	**3**	**Bryce Perkins (Sr.)**	98	Brennan Armstrong (Fr.)
RB	6	PK Kier (Jr.)		Wayne Taulapapa (So.)

DEFENSE (7)

Returning Starters in Bold

DE	91	Mandy Alonso (Jr.)	50	Tommy Christ (So.)
NT	**58**	**Eli Hanback (Sr.)**	76	Jordan Redmond (So.)
DE	94	Aaron Faumui (So.)	16	Richard Burney (Sr.)
OLB	**11**	**Charles Snowden (Jr.)**	56	Matt Gahm (Jr.)
ILB	**37**	**Jordan Mack (Sr.)**	**22**	**Robert Snyder (Jr.)**
ILB	**33**	**Zane Zandier (Jr.)**	57	T.C. Harrison (Fr.)
OLB	42	Noah Taylor (So.)	43	Elliott Brown (Jr.)
CB	**34**	**Bryce Hall (Sr.)**	20	Nick Grant (Jr.)
CB	32	Darrius Bratton (Jr.)	30	Myles Robinson (Sr.)
S	29	Joey Blount (Jr.)	15	De'Vante Cross (Jr.)
S	**28**	**Brenton Nelson (Jr.)**	7	Chris Moore (Jr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	26	Brian Delaney (Jr.)	**KR**	2	Joe Reed (Sr.)
P	81	Nash Griffin (Jr.)	**PR**	19	Chuck Davis (Jr.)

2018 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Bryce Perkins	**349**	**225**	**2,680**	**25**	**9**
Brennan Armstrong	**5**	**2**	**62**	**1**	**0**

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD
Jordan Ellis	215	1,026	4.8	10
Bryce Perkins	**212**	**923**	**4.4**	**9**
Olamide Zaccheaus	16	83	5.2	0
PK Kier	**26**	**80**	**3.1**	**0**

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Olamide Zaccheaus	93	1,058	11.4	9
Hasise Dubois	**52**	**578**	**11.1**	**5**
Joe Reed	**25**	**465**	**18.6**	**7**
Evan Butts	16	141	8.8	2

KICKING: **Brian Delaney, 12-16 FGs, 61 pts.**
TACKLES: Juan Thornhill, 98; **Jordan Mack, 66**
SACKS: Chris Peace, 7.5
INTERCEPTIONS: Juan Thornhill, 6

Returning Players in **Bold**

SCOUTING THE CAVALIERS

OPPOSING COACHES SIZE UP VIRGINIA

"Bronco (Mendenhall) is really doing a nice job here, maybe better than a lot of us expected. There's two things here that could really explode for them this year — the quarterback and the returning defense. … Bryce Perkins is good and could be great. He's athletic, he's smooth, and he changes their confidence when he's out there. They're a different team with him, and that's what you want from a starter. … They're losing guys at running back and wide receiver, but with Perkins there for one more year, you can get past that. They've got enough there to work with around him, especially if they find a complementary runner. … Defensively, they've really been building this whole time. We knew that part, but Bronco has brought in some players and developed some other ones. They're going to be deeper and longer at all three areas, and they're extremely well coached. Bronco has always been a great developer of defensive players. … It was a big experiment bringing him in from BYU, but he's gained a lot of respect from coaches in the region for how well coached those guys are, because they haven't been the most talented while he's been there. It's just now a solid roster. They really embraced the challenge of recruiting against Tech and recruiting to a higher-standard school academically."

Virginia Tech **Hokies**

National Forecast: **26** • ACC Coastal Prediction: **2** • Projected Record: **8-4, 5-3 ACC**

Ryan Willis

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Justin Fuente
Record at School: 25-15 (3 years)
Career Record: 51-38 (7 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Brad Cornelsen
Defensive Coordinator: Bud Foster
Location: Blacksburg, VA
Stadium: Lane Stadium (65,632)

KEY HOKIES

DAMON HAZELTON, WR The team leader in receptions (51), yards (802) and TD catches (eight) last year is a big-bodied receiver who is extra valuable in the red zone.

RYAN WILLIS, QB An unexpected starter after Josh Jackson broke his leg, Willis threw for 2,716 yards and 24 touchdowns in 10 starts.

DAX HOLLIFIELD, LB Hollifield thrived down the stretch last season. He's an emotional catalyst on a defense in need of one.

KEY LOSSES

RICKY WALKER, DT One of the only consistent presences on the defense last year, Walker had 49 tackles and 10.5 TFLs.

KYLE CHUNG, OL Chung played every spot on the line pretty well; a versatile player who'll be missed.

STEVEN PEOPLES, RB Nothing flashy, but he was the consistent back the Hokies craved. He ran for 786 yards and six touchdowns, averaging 5.0 yards per carry.

RISING STAR

Dalton Keene is the starting tight end, but the 6'3", 239-pound **JAMES MITCHELL** is an all-around threat and versatile enough that putting him and Keene on the field at the same time could open some interesting offensive options.

Virginia Tech's September loss as a 27.5-point favorite at Old Dominion seemed like just a big letdown for a good team. As it turned out, it was a harbinger of things to come for the disappointing Hokies, who extended their 26-year bowl streak by the skin of their teeth but finished under .500 for the first time since 1992.

A perfect storm of dismissals, injuries and the worst defensive season of coordinator Bud Foster's career led to the first flop in the Justin Fuente era. Virginia Tech didn't just lose. It lost big, with six losses by double digits and four by 20 points or more. A young roster contributed to the struggles, a delayed effect from the coaching change from Frank Beamer to Fuente, though that's hardly a satisfying explanation for a fan base that saw the team go from 19 wins in Fuente's first two years to six in Year 3.

OFFENSE A broken leg suffered by quarterback Josh Jackson in the ODU loss altered the Hokies' offensive plans in 2018, though backup Ryan Willis, a one-time Kansas transfer, put up decent stats as a replacement, with the fourth-highest QB rating in the ACC. Jackson has since transferred to Maryland, but Willis' above-average arm should serve the Hokies well given the intriguing group of pass catchers returning.

Receiver and tight end are undoubtedly the strengths of the Virginia Tech offense, even with the transfers of Eric Kumah and Chris Cunningham. Damon Hazelton was a second-team All-ACC pick despite being slowed by injury down the stretch. All that did was allow Tre Turner to break out. The big-play artist caught 16 passes for 326 yards and scored three touchdowns in the final five games of his freshman season. Those two, along with Hezekiah Grimsley and Phil Patterson, form a strong receiving group. Add tight ends Dalton Keene and breakout candidate James Mitchell, and this is a team with receiving threats galore.

Granted, the Hokies still need their ground game to help open that up. Shifty running back Deshawn McClease returns, as does junior Jalen Holston, whom coaches praised as having his best offseason to date.

Much will depend on whether the offensive line can jell. It's a young group, with projected starting tackles who are both sophomores (Christian Darrisaw and Silas Dzansi), but Fuente has praised their athleticism and physicality, and recruiting has been heading in the right direction. Center Brock Hoffman, a transfer from Coastal Carolina, was denied immediate eligibility in late April, but the Hokies are still hoping he will be able to play in 2019.

Despite their inconsistency, the Hokies still averaged 29.8 points per game. Approaching the 35.0 Tech averaged in Fuente's first year isn't an unreasonable goal.

DEFENSE Foster's "Lunch Pail Defense" was a shell of itself, allowing more points (31.0 ppg) and yards (438.7 ypg) and registering fewer sacks (24) and interceptions (seven) than in any of the coach's previous 23 years as Tech's coordinator.

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	at Boston College
Sept.	7	Old Dominion
Sept.	14	Furman
Sept.	27	Duke
Oct.	5	at Miami (Fla.)
Oct.	12	Rhode Island
Oct.	19	North Carolina
Nov.	2	at Notre Dame
Nov.	9	Wake Forest
Nov.	16	at Georgia Tech
Nov.	23	Pittsburgh
Nov.	29	at Virginia

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 6-7, 4-4 ACC

Sept.	3	at Florida State	W	24-3
Sept.	8	William & Mary	W	62-17
Sept.	22	at Old Dominion	L	35-49
Sept.	29	at Duke	W	31-14
Oct.	6	Notre Dame	L	23-45
Oct.	13	at North Carolina	W	22-19
Oct.	25	Georgia Tech	L	28-49
Nov.	3	Boston College	L	21-31
Nov.	10	at Pittsburgh	L	22-52
Nov.	17	Miami (Fla.)	L	14-38
Nov.	23	Virginia (ot)	W	34-31
Dec.	1	Marshall	W	41-20
Dec.	31	vs. Cincinnati #	L	31-35

#Military Bowl

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	ACC	NATIONAL
Scoring	29.8 ppg	7	61
Rushing	174.3 ypg	9	57
Passing	253.8 ypg	5	41
Total	428.2 ypg	6	39
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**ACC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	31.0 ppg	10	85
Rushing	210.3 ypg	12	106
Passing	228.4 ypg	8	63
Total	438.7 ypg	11	98
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**ACC**	**NATIONAL**
+3	+0.23	5	46

2019 RECRUITS

1. Doug Nester, OG, Huntington, WV
2. Jaden Payoute, WR, Chesterfield, VA
3. Bryan Hudson, OG, Georgetown, KY
4. J.R. Walker, DB, Clayton, NC
5. Tayvion Robinson, WR, Virginia Beach, VA
6. Keshawn King, RB, Orange Park, FL
7. Jacoby Pinckney, WR, Spartanburg, SC
8. Ny'Quee Hawkins, S, Orange, NJ
9. Jesse Hanson, OG, Blue Ridge, VA
10. Elijah Bowick, WR, Charlotte, NC
11. Nick Gallo, TE, Richboro, PA
12. Tahj Gary, RB, Atlanta, GA
13. Norell Pollard, DT, Apopka, FL
14. Will Pritchard, OG, Moseley, VA
15. Mario Kendricks, DT, Kissimmee, FL
16. Dean Ferguson, LB, Sterling, VA
17. Josh Fuga, DT, Woodbridge, VA
18. DaShawn Crawford, DT, Bay Springs, MS*
19. Amare Barno, OLB, Blythewood, SC*
20. Jaden Cunningham, DT, Lithonia, GA*
21. Knox Kadum, QB, Rome, GA
22. Brion Murray, CB, Milford, DE*

*junior college transfer

Recruits ranked according to the 247SportsComposite

Getty Images

ADVANCED STATS

5 Factors: College Football's Most Important Stats

Field Position[1]		Rank
Offense	29.9	65
Defense	27.9	31
Margin	**+2.0**	**46**

Efficiency[2]		Rank
Offense	43.3%	51
Defense	40.5%	59
Margin	**+2.8%**	**50**

Explosiveness[3]		Rank
Offense	5.9	57
Defense	6.4	115
Margin	**-0.5**	**98**

Finishing Drives[4]		Rank
Offense	4.4	84
Defense	4.8	90
Margin	**-0.4**	**95**

Adjusted TO Margin[5]		Rank
Projected	-2.4	91
Actual	3	46
Margin	**+5.4**	**17**

KEY: 1-Average starting field position by yard line; **2**-Rate of successful plays (gaining 50% of necessary yards on 1st down, 70% on 2nd down, 100% on 3rd down); **3**-Explosiveness=yards per play; **4**-Points per trip inside 40-yard line; **5**-TO margin accounting for "luck" • Advanced stats provided by Bill Connelly of SB Nation

NUMBERS TO KNOW

6.4

Virginia Tech's defense allowed 6.4 yards per play in 2018, 1.3 per play more than in 2017 (5.1). That was the fifth-largest regression in FBS, and it was easily the worst average of Bud Foster's tenure as defensive coordinator.

71

Of course, you should probably expect a pretty significant regression when you undergo a dramatic youth movement: Freshmen and sophomores accounted for a whopping 71 percent of all tackles. That will not be the case in 2019.

55

When Tech's offense encountered a third down, it was probably third-and-long. In fact, 55 percent of them required seven or more yards to go, 112th in FBS. Not surprisingly, Tech's third-down conversion rate was quite bad: 37.3 percent (83rd).

Unprecedented turnover, youth and injuries can explain a good deal of that. Virginia Tech started one of the youngest defenses in the country, with nine freshmen or sophomores in the starting lineup for the Military Bowl against Cincinnati. But even youth doesn't explain allowing 52 points and 13.9 yards per play in an astonishing loss at Pittsburgh.

The 2019 group's strength is up the middle. Rayshard Ashby (team-high 105 tackles) and Dax Hollifield return at linebacker, while safeties Reggie Floyd and Divine Deablo provide experience and pop in the secondary.

Questions remain about a defensive line that wasn't very disruptive last year and lost its best player in Ricky Walker. End Houshun Gaines (4.5 sacks) will be coming back from an ACL tear suffered in November, putting pressure on players such as Emmanuel Belmar and TyJuan Garbutt to turn a corner. In the middle, Jarrod Hewitt is taking on Walker's leadership role, though his production needs an uptick. The Hokies hope junior college transfer DaShawn Crawford is an instant starter at tackle.

The secondary should be buoyed by the debut of Jeremy Webb, a rangy corner who injured both of his Achilles in the last year. The junior college transfer would add experience to a young cornerback tandem of Caleb Farley and Bryce Watts that took its lumps last fall.

SPECIALISTS Punter Oscar Bradburn (42.6-yard average) is solid, but Tech never found a reliable punt returner last season and will hold open auditions. The placekicking job is wide open, too. Brian Johnson went 12-of-18 last year but was just 3-of-9 from 40-plus.

FINAL ANALYSIS After two strong seasons to start his time at Tech, Fuente lost a lot of goodwill by finishing under .500 last year. The Hokies' two sacred streaks — 26 years of bowls, 15 years of victories over Virginia — stayed intact, but barely.

This could be a season in which Virginia Tech corrects its course. This is a more experienced team with a very manageable schedule, plenty of playmakers on offense and a defense that, quite frankly, couldn't be worse than last year. In a less-than-daunting ACC Coastal Division, that should be enough to be in the mix.

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (5)

WR	**14**	**Damon Hazelton (Jr.)**	8	Phil Patterson (Jr.)
WR	11	Tre Turner (So.)	81	Darryle Simmons (Fr.)
WR	6	Hezekiah Grimsley (Jr.)	19	DeJuan Ellis (Fr.)
LT	**77**	**Christian Darrisaw (So.)**	79	Tyrell Smith (Sr.)
LG	54	Lecitus Smith (So.)	52	Austin Cannon (Jr.)
C		Brock Hoffman (Jr.)	75	Zachariah Hoyt (Jr.)
RG	**75**	**Zachariah Hoyt (Jr.)**	57	John Harris (Fr.)
RT	60	Silas Dzansi (So.)	71	T.J. Jackson (Jr.)
TE	**29**	**Dalton Keene (Jr.)**	82	James Mitchell (So.)
QB	**5**	**Ryan Willis (Sr.)**	2	Hendon Hooker (So.)
RB	33	Deshawn McClease (Jr.)	13	Jalen Holston (Jr.)

DEFENSE (11)

Returning Starters in Bold

DE	**40**	**Emmanuel Belmar (Jr.)**	35	Zion Debose (So.)
DT	**55**	**Jarrod Hewitt (Jr.)**	98	Rob Porcher (So.)
DT	95	DaShawn Crawford (Jr.)		Jaden Cunningham (Jr.)
DE	45	TyJuan Garbutt (So.)	**11**	**Houshun Gaines (Sr.)**
ILB	**23**	**Rayshard Ashby (Jr.)**	49	Keshon Artis (So.)
ILB	**4**	**Dax Hollifield (So.)**	**44**	**Dylan Rivers (Jr.)**
OLB	**9**	**Khalil Ladler (Jr.)**	22	Chamarri Conner (So.)
CB	**3**	**Caleb Farley (So.)**	26	Jovonn Quillen (Sr.)
CB	2	Jeremy Webb (Jr.)	**5**	**Bryce Watts (Jr.)**
SS	**21**	**Reggie Floyd (Sr.)**	7	Devon Hunter (So.)
FS	**17**	**Divine Deablo (Jr.)**	18	Tyree Rodgers (Jr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	93	Brian Johnson (Jr.)	**KR** 24	Terius Wheatley (So.)
P	91	Oscar Bradburn (Jr.)	**PR** 14	Damon Hazelton (Jr.)

2018 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Ryan Willis	**364**	**213**	**2,716**	**24**	**9**
Josh Jackson	58	36	575	5	1

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD
Steven Peoples	158	786	5.0	6
Deshawn McClease	**96**	**433**	**4.5**	**2**
Ryan Willis	**113**	**354**	**3.1**	**4**
Jalen Holston	**57**	**281**	**4.9**	**2**

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Damon Hazelton	**51**	**802**	**15.7**	**8**
Eric Kumah	42	559	13.3	7
Hezekiah Grimsley	**31**	**382**	**12.3**	**1**
Dalton Keene	**28**	**341**	**12.2**	**3**

KICKING: **Brian Johnson, 12-18 FGs, 80 pts.**

TACKLES: **Rayshard Ashby, 105; Reggie Floyd, 88**

SACKS: **Houshun Gaines, 4.5**

INTERCEPTIONS: **Caleb Farley, 2**; Reggie Floyd, 2

Returning Players in **Bold**

SCOUTING THE HOKIES

OPPOSING COACHES SIZE UP VIRGINIA TECH

"Everyone is talking about this program. Something's not right. This isn't what you sign up for getting Justin Fuente from Memphis and being this many years in with no superstars on offense. You just wonder what's going on there. Why are so many kids transferring out? Especially for a guy who, at least we all think, the players really like. It's really hard to forecast these guys. … They're thin at quarterback and running back. That's not good. The (Ryan) Willis kid will probably start at QB, but they have a lot of guys they're bringing in this summer to push that position; they need a true feature back to help him out, and they may not have one. They have some good receivers; that's where they're strongest on offense. … Bud Foster is going to do what Bud does. It's not about pressures or blitzes, it's actually about taking the two or three things you do best and stopping that. He's old school. He wants to make you uncomfortable above all else. He wants to make you beat him left-handed. They're really good at winning first down on defense. … They have some talented players, and they've shown some flashes at times, but you get that feeling that they're moving away from Beamer ball year by year, leaving what made them a famous program."

AAC Preview

East	Predicted Order of Finish	West
1 *UCF* **KNIGHTS** 10-3, 6-2 AAC		1 *Memphis* **TIGERS** 9-4, 6-2 AAC
2 *Cincinnati* **BEARCATS** 8-4, 5-3 AAC		2 *Houston* **COUGARS** 8-4, 6-2 AAC
3 *USF* **BULLS** 6-6, 5-3 AAC		3 *Tulane* **GREEN WAVE** 6-6, 4-4 AAC
4 *Temple* **OWLS** 7-5, 4-4 AAC		4 *SMU* **MUSTANGS** 6-6, 4-4 AAC
5 *East Carolina* **PIRATES** 4-8, 1-7 AAC		5 *Navy* **MIDSHIPMEN** 5-7, 4-4 AAC
6 *Connecticut* **HUSKIES** 2-10, 0-8 AAC		6 *Tulsa* **GOLDEN HURRICANE** 4-8, 3-5 AAC

American Athletic Conference Championship: **UCF over Memphis**

Games to Watch

AUG. 29
UCLA AT CINCINNATI
The Bearcats' 2018 turnaround started with a Week 1 win at UCLA. Now, the Bruins come calling on the first Thursday night of the '19 season.

AUG. 31
HOUSTON AT OKLAHOMA
The Dana Holgorsen era begins with an intriguing trip to Norman. Prediction: There will be a lot of points scored. Another prediction: OU will win.

AUG. 31
OLE MISS AT MEMPHIS
Ole Miss' last trip to Memphis ended with a 37–24 win by the hosts. Don't be surprised if the Tigers knock off their neighbors from Oxford once again.

SEPT. 14
STANFORD AT UCF
Stanford might not be a national contender in 2019, but getting the Cardinal to make the cross-country trip is still a big moment for the AAC.

SEPT. 19
HOUSTON AT TULANE
Tulane could be a sleeper in the AAC West. We'll find out if the Green Wave are for real when Houston visits the Big Easy for this Thursday night clash.

SEPT. 26
NAVY AT MEMPHIS
It's a big early-season test for a Navy program that won only three games in 2018. This will be a good indication if the Midshipmen are back.

McCrae: UCF Athletics; Barnett: USF Athletics

2019 Unit Rankings

	QB	RB	WR/TE	OL	DL	LB	DB
CINCINNATI	3	1	5	6	6	2	2
CONNECTICUT	12	7	11	7	12	12	12
EAST CAROLINA	11	12	10	9	9	9	10
HOUSTON	1	8	2	3	7	11	9
MEMPHIS	4	3	3	4	2	3	4
NAVY	8	11	12	12	11	10	11
SMU	5	9	4	11	4	6	8
TEMPLE	7	10	7	2	3	1	3
TULANE	9	4	8	8	1	7	6
TULSA	10	6	9	10	10	5	7
UCF	2	2	1	1	8	4	1
USF	6	5	6	5	5	8	5

Recruiting by School

1. UCF
2. Memphis
3. SMU
4. East Carolina
5. USF
6. Cincinnati
7. Houston
8. Tulane
9. Temple
10. Tulsa
11. Navy
12. Connecticut

Greg McCrae, UCF

Blake Barnett, USF

2019 Bowl Projections

Cotton Bowl: UCF vs. Notre Dame
Gasparilla Bowl: Cincinnati vs. FIU
Liberty Bowl: Memphis vs. West Virginia
Birmingham Bowl: Houston vs. Southern Miss
Boca Raton Bowl: USF vs. Ohio
Military Bowl: Temple vs. Pittsburgh
Hawaii Bowl: Tulane vs. BYU
Cure Bowl: SMU vs. Georgia Southern

AAC Coordinator Carousel

Connecticut: Offense
New: Frank Giufre
Old: John Dunn

Connecticut: Defense
New: Lou Spanos
Old: Billy Crocker

East Carolina: Offense
New: Donnie Kirkpatrick
Old: Tony Peterson

East Carolina: Defense
New: Bob Trott
Old: David Blackwell

Houston: Offense
New: Marquel Blackwell, Brandon Jones
Old: Kendal Briles

Houston: Defense
New: Doug Belk, Joe Cauthen
Old: Mark D'Onofrio

Memphis: Offense
New: Kevin Johns, Ryan Silverfield
Old: Kenny Dillingham

Memphis: Defense
New: Adam Fuller
Old: Chris Ball

Navy: Defense
New: Brian Newberry, Brian Norwood
Old: Dale Pehrson

Temple: Offense
New: Mike Uremovich, Thad Ward
Old: Dave Patenaude

Temple: Defense
New: Francis Brown, Jeff Knowles
Old: Andrew Thacker

Tulane: Offense
New: Will Hall
Old: Doug Ruse

Tulsa: Defense
New: Joseph Gillespie
Old: Bill Young

USF: Offense
New: Kerwin Bell
Old: Sterlin Gilbert

OCT. 4
UCF AT CINCINNATI
This figures to be UCF's toughest test in the regular season — and it's a great opportunity for the surging Bearcats to make a statement.

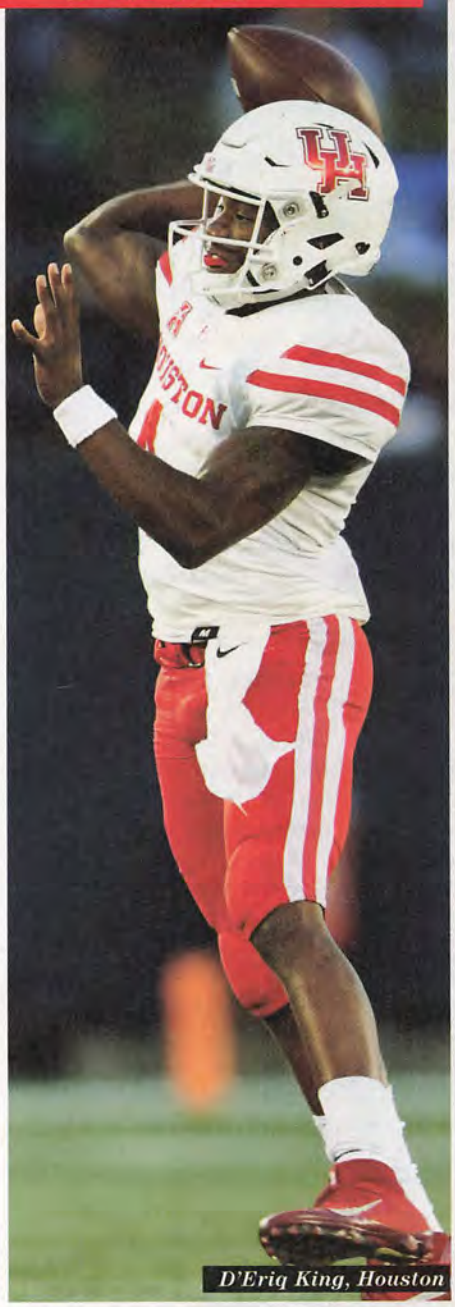
OCT. 12
CINCINNATI AT HOUSTON
The Bearcats' formidable defense will be tested by QB D'Eriq King and a powerful Houston offense in this pivotal East vs. West showdown.

OCT. 26
UCF AT TEMPLE
These two teams combined for 1,300 yards and 70 first downs in UCF's thrilling 52–40 win in Orlando last season. Sign us up for a repeat performance.

NOV. 16
MEMPHIS AT HOUSTON
The AAC West title could be on the line. The Tigers rallied from 17 down in the second half to beat Houston in their last visit to TDECU Stadium.

NOV. 29
USF AT UCF
UCF has won two straight and four of the last six in this in-state rivalry. This could be a big game for Bulls coach Charlie Strong.

DEC. 14
ARMY VS. NAVY
Navy has lost three straight — each by seven points or fewer — in this great rivalry. It's time for the Midshipmen to restore order.


D'Eriq King, Houston

AAC Returning Leaders

Passing	ATT	COMP	PCT	YDS	TD	INT	AVG/G
D'Eriq King, Houston	345	219	63.5	2,982	36	6	271.1
Blake Barnett, USF	350	214	61.1	2,710	12	11	246.4
Brady White, Memphis	392	246	62.8	3,296	26	9	235.4

Rushing	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD	LONG	AVG/G
Michael Warren II, Cincinnati	244	1,329	5.5	19	81	110.8
Jordan Cronkrite, USF	184	1,121	6.1	9	80	93.4
Greg McCrae, UCF	133	1,182	8.9	10	74	90.9

Receiving	REC	YDS	AVG	TD	LONG	AVG/G
James Proche, SMU	93	1,199	12.9	12	67	99.9
Damonte Coxie, Memphis	72	1,174	16.3	7	75	83.9
Reggie Roberson Jr., SMU	52	802	15.4	6	59	80.2

Tackles: Cooper Edmiston, Tulsa (113); Richie Grant, UCF (109)
Sacks: Patrick Johnson, Tulane (10.5), Bryce Huff, Memphis (9.5)
Interceptions: Richie Grant, UCF (6)

2018 AAC Standings

EAST	AAC	OVERALL	WEST	AAC	OVERALL
UCF	8-0	12-1	Memphis	5-3	8-6
Temple	7-1	8-5	Houston	5-3	8-5
Cincinnati	6-2	11-2	Tulane	5-3	7-6
USF	3-5	7-6	SMU	4-4	5-7
East Carolina	1-7	3-9	Navy	2-6	3-10
Connecticut	0-8	1-11	Tulsa	2-6	3-9

2018 Bowl Results

Gasparilla Bowl: Marshall 38, USF 20
Cure Bowl: Tulane 41, Louisiana 24
Birmingham Bowl: Wake Forest 37, Memphis 34
Armed Forces Bowl: Army 70, Houston 14
Military Bowl: Cincinnati 35, Virginia Tech 31
Independence Bowl: Duke 56, Temple 27
Fiesta Bowl: LSU 40, UCF 32

2018 AAC Team Stats & Rankings

Offense

	SCORING	RUSH	PASS	TOTAL
Cincinnati	34.9 (4T)	239.5 (4)	219.0 (8)	458.5 (4)
Connecticut	22.2 (12)	199.5 (8)	178.9 (10)	378.4 (10)
East Carolina	22.8 (11)	129.8 (11)	284.8 (2)	414.4 (6)
Houston	43.9 (1)	217.1 (6)	295.5 (1)	512.5 (3)
Memphis	42.9 (3)	279.9 (1)	243.2 (7)	523.1 (1)
Navy	25.0 (9)	276.5 (2)	72.8 (12)	349.3 (12)
SMU	30.4 (6)	115.5 (12)	271.7 (3)	387.2 (9)
Temple	34.9 (4T)	155.9 (10)	253.6 (5)	409.5 (7)
Tulane	26.8 (8)	218.2 (5)	182.9 (9)	401.1 (8)
Tulsa	24.1 (10)	200.5 (7)	177.1 (11)	377.6 (11)
UCF	43.2 (2)	265.2 (3)	257.5 (4)	522.7 (2)
USF	28.5 (7)	193.6 (9)	244.1 (6)	437.7 (5)

Defense

	SCORING	RUSH	PASS	TOTAL
Cincinnati	17.2 (1)	113.0 (1)	190.5 (3)	303.5 (1)
Connecticut	50.4 (12)	335.0 (12)	282.4 (12)	617.4 (12)
East Carolina	37.3 (11)	169.8 (3)	270.1 (10)	439.8 (9)
Houston	37.2 (10)	221.3 (8)	275.5 (11)	496.8 (11)
Memphis	31.9 (6)	171.8 (4)	256.4 (8)	428.1 (6)
Navy	33.5 (8)	191.5 (6)	234.8 (7)	426.4 (5)
SMU	35.3 (9)	196.4 (7)	232.9 (6)	429.3 (7)
Temple	27.1 (3)	185.2 (5)	187.4 (2)	372.5 (2)
Tulane	27.5 (4)	147.3 (2)	259.5 (9)	406.8 (3)
Tulsa	29.6 (5)	233.1 (10)	174.6 (1)	407.7 (4)
UCF	22.7 (2)	222.3 (9)	211.4 (5)	433.7 (8)
USF	32.0 (7)	247.5 (11)	199.1 (4)	446.6 (10)

King: Houston Athletics; Coxie, White: Memphis Athletics; Grant: UCF Athletics

ALL-AAC TEAM

First-Team Offense

QB	**D'Eriq King**	5-11	195	Sr.	Houston
RB	**Greg McCrae**	5-10	175	Jr.	UCF
RB	**Michael Warren II**	5-11	218	Jr.	Cincinnati
AP	**Adrian Killins Jr.**	5-8	164	Sr.	UCF
WR	**Damonte Coxie**	6-3	200	Jr.	Memphis
WR	**James Proche**	5-11	190	Sr.	SMU
TE	**Mitchell Wilcox**	6-5	245	Sr.	USF
C	**Jordan Johnson**	6-2	320	Sr.	UCF
OL	**Jake Brown**	6-3	305	Sr.	UCF
OL	**Jovahn Fair**	6-2	300	Sr.	Temple
OL	**Cole Schneider**	6-4	312	So.	UCF
OL	**Dustin Woodard**	6-2	285	Sr.	Memphis

Damonte Coxie, Memphis

Richie Grant, UCF

First-Team Defense

DL	**Brendon Hayes**	6-3	293	Sr.	UCF
DL	**Bryce Huff**	6-3	245	Sr.	Memphis
DL	**Patrick Johnson**	6-3	255	Jr.	Tulane
DL	**Quincy Roche**	6-4	235	Jr.	Temple
LB	**Shaun Bradley**	6-1	225	Sr.	Temple
LB	**Nate Evans**	6-1	241	Sr.	UCF
LB	**Perry Young**	5-11	220	Sr.	Cincinnati
CB	**T.J. Carter**	5-11	180	Jr.	Memphis
CB	**Nevelle Clarke**	6-1	187	Sr.	UCF
S	**Richie Grant**	6-0	194	Jr.	UCF
S	**James Wiggins**	6-0	202	Jr.	Cincinnati

First-Team Specialists

K	**Jake Verity**	6-1	185	Sr.	East Carolina
P	**James Smith**	6-5	225	Jr.	Cincinnati
KR	**Isaiah Wright**	6-2	220	Sr.	Temple
PR	**Isaiah Wright**	6-2	220	Sr.	Temple

SECOND-TEAM OFFENSE

QB	**Desmond Ridder**	6-4	212	So.	Cincinnati
RB	**Jordan Cronkrite**	5-11	207	Sr.	USF
RB	**Patrick Taylor Jr.**	6-3	223	Sr.	Memphis
AP	**Johnny Ford**	5-5	168	So.	USF
WR	**Gabriel Davis**	6-3	212	Jr.	UCF
WR	**Marquez Stevenson**	6-0	190	Jr.	Houston
TE	**Josiah Deguara**	6-3	240	Sr.	Cincinnati
C	**Matt Hennessy**	6-4	295	Jr.	Temple
OL	**Josh Jones**	6-7	310	Sr.	Houston
OL	**Marcus Norman**	6-6	301	Sr.	USF
OL	**D'Ante Smith**	6-4	295	Sr.	East Carolina
OL	**Jarrid Williams**	6-7	305	Sr.	Houston

SECOND-TEAM DEFENSE

DL	**Isaiah Chambers**	6-5	265	Jr.	Houston
DL	**Greg Reaves**	6-2	248	Sr.	USF
DL	**Delontae Scott**	6-5	260	Sr.	SMU
DL	**Jonathan Wilson**	6-3	280	Sr.	Memphis
LB	**Cooper Edmiston**	6-3	241	Sr.	Tulsa
LB	**Richard Moore**	6-0	230	Sr.	SMU
LB	**Nico Sawtelle**	6-2	222	Sr.	USF
CB	**Mike Hampton**	6-1	185	Jr.	USF
CB	**Brandon Moore**	6-0	186	Jr.	UCF
S	**Rodney Clemons**	6-0	200	Sr.	SMU
S	**Gleson Sprewell**	6-2	195	Jr.	Houston

SECOND-TEAM SPECIALISTS

K	**Riley Patterson**	5-11	180	Jr.	Memphis
P	**Thomas Bennett**	6-3	182	Sr.	Tulsa
KR	**Amare Jones**	5-11	190	So.	Tulane
PR	**Pop Williams**	5-9	172	Sr.	Memphis

Brady White
Memphis

D'Ante Smith
East Carolina

Kevin Mensah
Connecticut

Davondre Robinson
East Carolina

THIRD-TEAM OFFENSE

QB	**Brady White**	6-3	205	Jr.	Memphis
RB	**Darius Bradwell**	6-1	230	Sr.	Tulane
RB	**Kevin Mensah**	5-9	197	Jr.	Connecticut
AP	**Keylon Stokes**	6-0	190	Jr.	Tulsa
WR	**Darnell Mooney**	5-11	175	Sr.	Tulane
WR	**Reggie Roberson Jr.**	6-0	195	Jr.	SMU
TE	**Joey Magnifico**	6-4	235	Sr.	Memphis
C	**Ford Higgins**	6-2	260	Sr.	Navy
OL	**Corey Dublin**	6-4	300	Jr.	Tulane
OL	**Morgan James**	6-5	320	Sr.	Cincinnati
OL	**Matt Peart**	6-5	300	Sr.	Connecticut
OL	**Vincent Picozzi**	6-4	295	Jr.	Temple

THIRD-TEAM DEFENSE

DL	**Trevis Gipson**	6-4	268	Sr.	Tulsa
DL	**Michael Pitts**	6-4	255	Jr.	Cincinnati
DL	**Cameron Sample**	6-3	280	Jr.	Tulane
DL	**Alex Turner**	6-2	293	Sr.	East Carolina
LB	**Austin Hall**	6-2	215	Sr.	Memphis
LB	**Chapelle Russell**	6-1	215	Sr.	Temple
LB	**Bryan Wright**	6-3	240	Sr.	Cincinnati
CB	**Coby Bryant**	6-1	195	Jr.	Cincinnati
CB	**Harrison Hand**	6-0	192	Jr.	Temple
S	**Deontay Anderson**	6-2	217	Jr.	Houston
S	**Davondre Robinson**	6-0	201	Jr.	East Carolina

THIRD-TEAM SPECIALISTS

K	**Dalton Witherspoon**	5-9	170	Jr.	Houston
P	**Dane Roy**	6-7	240	Sr.	Houston
KR	**Terrence Horne Jr.**	5-7	176	Fr.	USF
PR	**Otis Anderson**	5-11	174	Jr.	UCF

Mensah: Connecticut Athletics; Smith, Robinson: ECU Athletics

Cincinnati **Bearcats**

National Forecast: **39** • AAC East Prediction: **2** • Projected Record: **8-4, 5-3 AAC**

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	29	UCLA
Sept.	7	at Ohio State
Sept.	14	Miami (Ohio)
Sept.	28	at Marshall
Oct.	4	UCF
Oct.	12	at Houston
Oct.	19	Tulsa
Nov.	2	at East Carolina
Nov.	9	Connecticut
Nov.	16	at South Florida
Nov.	23	Temple
Nov.	29	at Memphis

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 11-2, 6-2 AAC

Sept.	1	at UCLA	W	26-17
Sept.	8	at Miami (Ohio)	W	21-0
Sept.	15	Alabama A&M	W	63-7
Sept.	22	Ohio	W	34-30
Sept.	29	at Connecticut	W	49-7
Oct.	6	Tulane	W	37-21
Oct.	20	at Temple (ot)	L	17-24
Oct.	27	at SMU (ot)	W	26-20
Nov.	3	Navy	W	42-0
Nov.	10	South Florida	W	35-23
Nov.	17	at UCF	L	13-38
Nov.	23	East Carolina	W	56-6
Dec.	31	vs. Virginia Tech #	W	35-31

#Military Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Cameron Jones, QB, Lexington, KY
2. Justin Harris, CB, Huber Heights, OH
3. Jonathan Allen, OT, Dayton, OH
4. Steven Hawthorne, DE, Chicago, IL
5. Zach Hummel, DE, Hilliard, OH
6. Dorian Holloway, OLB, Columbus, OH
7. Izaiah Ruffin, DE, Oak Park, IL
8. Tre Tucker, WR, Cuyahoga Falls, OH
9. Jacob Dingle, S, Louisville, KY
10. Michael Lindauer, QB, Evansville, IN

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	AAC	NATIONAL
Scoring	34.9 ppg	4	23
Rushing	239.5 ypg	4	15
Passing	219.0 ypg	8	76
Total	458.5 ypg	4	23
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**AAC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	17.2 ppg	1	8
Rushing	113.0 ypg	1	13
Passing	190.5 ypg	3	26
Total	303.5 ypg	1	11
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**AAC**	**NATIONAL**
0	0.00	7	69

STAT CORNER

6.7

Third-and-manageable: UC's average third down distance on offense improved from 7.6 yards to go (115th in FBS) to 6.7 (31st).

OFFENSE Cincinnati's running game flourished in 2018, finishing 15th nationally, and more of the same can be expected as the Bearcats return star running back Michael Warren II and add 2017 rushing leader Gerrid Doaks back to the mix after he missed last season due to injury. Warren is coming off a fantastic season that saw him rush for over 1,300 yards and score 20 total touchdowns. Add in dual-threat quarterback Desmond Ridder, and the ground game should be ready to function at a high level yet again.

Ridder started 12 of the final 13 games and was named the AAC's Newcomer of the Year. He will look to build off a very solid rookie campaign in which he threw for 2,445 yards while adding another 583 on the ground to go along with his 25 total touchdowns (20 passing, five rushing) and only five interceptions.

The Bearcats passing attack will need to find a replacement for departed senior Kahlil Lewis, who led the team in receptions, yards and receiving touchdowns. A clear-cut No. 1 target will likely emerge from the trio of Rashad Medaris, Thomas Geddis and Jayshon Jackson. A strong group of tight ends led by returning receiving leader Josiah Deguara along with Josh Whyle and Leonard Taylor — two of the highest-rated recruits of the Luke Fickell era — should also help fill the void left by Lewis.

The right side of the offensive line returns along with center Jakari Robinson, who started several games in the middle of the season due to injury. The left side is unproven but should get a boost from Michigan transfer James Hudson.

DEFENSE The Bearcats shined on defense in Fickell's second season, finishing eighth nationally in scoring defense (17.2 ppg), 11th in total defense (303.5 ppg) and 13th in rushing defense (113.0 ypg).

The biggest question lies on the defensive line, as Cincinnati must replace all-league tackles Cortez Broughton and Marquise Copeland and end Kimoni Fitz — a trio that combined for 14 sacks in 2018.

To offset the losses up front, the Bearcats will look to a strong group of linebackers and defensive backs led by linebackers Perry Young, whose 2018 season was cut short due to injury, and Bryan Wright, along with star safety James Wiggins (four INTs in '18).

The Bearcats also return three of their top four corners in Coby Bryant, Arquon Bush and Cam Jefferies, all of whom recorded at least one interception.

SPECIALISTS Special teams was a bit of a mixed bag for Cincinnati in 2018, but the Bearcats return all the key contributors. James Smith returns after a standout sophomore season in which he averaged 46.6 yards per punt. Placekicker Cole Smith struggled, hitting only 5-of-12 field goals. He will battle Ryan Jones for the job in preseason camp.

FINAL ANALYSIS Cincinnati was one of the surprise teams in the nation last season, improving from 4–8 in Fickell's first season to 11–2. And with over 5,000 yards of total offense returning, expectations are sky high for this team in 2019.

Questions at wide receiver and along the defensive line must be answered, and the Bearcats will be faced with a much tougher schedule than last year, so a second consecutive double-digit win season could be a challenge. Even with those obstacles, Cincinnati has the pieces to make a run at its first AAC title since 2014.

Michael Warren II

"Night and day difference in two years. They're bigger and way more physical. The only thing that will slow them down is Luke (Fickell) taking another job."

— An opposing AAC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (7)			Returning Starters in Bold	
WR	17	**Rashad Medaris (Sr.)**	13	Trent Cloud (So.)
WR	21	Jayshon Jackson (So.)	12	Alec Pierce (So.)
WR	85	**Thomas Geddis (Sr.)**	7	Javan Hawes (Jr.)
LT	55	James Hudson (Fr.)	51	Lorenz Metz (Fr.)
LG	74	Jeremy Cooper (Fr.)	77	Vincent McConnell (So.)
C	52	Jakari Robinson (So.)	71	Colin Woodside (Fr.)
RG	78	**Morgan James (Sr.)**	50	Dylan O'Quinn (Fr.)
RT	75	**Chris Ferguson (Sr.)**	58	Darius Harper (Jr.)
TE	83	**Josiah Deguara (Sr.)**	87	Bruno Labelle (Jr.)
QB	9	**Desmond Ridder (So.)**	6	Ben Bryant (Fr.)
RB	3	**Michael Warren II (Jr.)**	23	Gerrid Doaks (Jr.)
DEFENSE (7)				
DE	43	**Michael Pitts (Jr.)**	19	Ethan Tucky (Jr.)
DT	92	Curtis Brooks (Jr.)	99	Marcus Brown (Jr.)
DT	93	Elijah Ponder (Jr.)	90	Jabari Taylor (So.)
DE	21	Myjai Sanders (So.)	42	Malik Vann (So.)
LB	6	**Perry Young (Sr.)**	13	Ty Van Fossen (Fr.)
LB	11	**Bryan Wright (Sr.)**	41	Joel Dublanko (Jr.)
LB	8	Jarell White (Jr.)	17	Darrian Beavers (Jr.)
CB	7	**Coby Bryant (Jr.)**	14	**Cam Jefferies (Sr.)**
CB	9	Arquon Bush (Fr.)	15	Taj Ward (Fr.)
S	5	**Darrick Forrest (Jr.)**	3	Ja'von Hicks (So.)
S	32	**James Wiggins (Jr.)**	20	Bryan Cook (Jr.)
SPECIAL TEAMS				
K	97	Ryan Jones (Sr.)	KR 32	James Wiggins (Jr.)
P	37	James Smith (Jr.)	PR 20	Aulden Knight (Jr.)

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Desmond Ridder, 311-194-2,445-5, 20 TDs
Rushing: Michael Warren II, 244 att., 1,329 yds., 19 TDs
Receiving: Josiah Deguara, 38 rec., 468 yds., 5 TDs
Tackles: Jarell White, 58
Sacks: Bryan Wright, 5.0
Interceptions: James Wiggins, 4

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Luke Fickell
Record at School: 15-10 (2 years)
Career Record: 21-17 (3 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Mike Denbrock
Defensive Coordinator: Marcus Freeman
Cincinnati, OH • Nippert Stadium (40,000)

Cincinnati Athletics

Connecticut **Huskies**

National Forecast: **126** • AAC East Prediction: **6** • Projected Record: **2-10, 0-8 AAC**

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	29	Wagner
Sept.	7	Illinois
Sept.	21	at Indiana
Sept.	28	at UCF
Oct.	5	South Florida
Oct.	12	at Tulane
Oct.	19	Houston
Oct.	26	at Massachusetts
Nov.	1	Navy
Nov.	9	at Cincinnati
Nov.	23	East Carolina
Nov.	30	at Temple

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 1-11, 0-8 AAC

Aug.	30	UCF	L	17-56
Sept.	8	at Boise State	L	7-62
Sept.	15	Rhode Island	W	56-49
Sept.	22	at Syracuse	L	21-51
Sept.	29	Cincinnati	L	7-49
Oct.	6	at Memphis	L	14-55
Oct.	20	at South Florida	L	30-38
Oct.	27	Massachusetts	L	17-22
Nov.	3	at Tulsa	L	19-49
Nov.	10	SMU	L	50-62
Nov.	17	at East Carolina	L	21-55
Nov.	24	Temple	L	7-57

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Myles Bell, CB, Plantation, FL
2. Eric Watts, DE, Sumter, SC
3. Justin Moore, DE, Carrollton, TX
4. Matt Drayton, WR, Jacksonville, FL
5. Cameron Ross, WR, Newark, DE
6. Dillon Harris, OLB, Bloomfield, CT*
7. Jayce Medlock, TE, DeSoto, TX
8. Malik Dixon, DB, Orlando, FL
9. Jeff Woods, DL, Fayetteville, NC
10. Chase Lundt, OT, Arlington, TX

*junior college transfer

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	AAC	NATIONAL
Scoring	22.2 ppg	12	112
Rushing	199.5 ypg	8	37
Passing	178.9 ypg	10	108
Total	378.4 ypg	10	89
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**AAC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	50.4 ppg	12	130
Rushing	335.0 ypg	12	130
Passing	282.4 ypg	12	126
Total	617.4 ypg	12	130
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**AAC**	**NATIONAL**
-17	-1.42	12	129

STAT CORNER

8.9

The Huskies allowed 8.9 yards per play on first down, easily the worst in FBS. They gave up nearly a first down on every first down!

OFFENSE With the loss of do-it-all quarterback David Pindell as well as his offensive coordinator and his top four receivers, the Huskies have plenty of production to replace. To keep the offense moving, new coordinator Frank Giufre will likely rely heavily on the running game, led by leading returning rusher Kevin Mensah and Toledo transfer Art Thompkins. After a solid freshman season, Mensah broke out as a sophomore in 2018 with 1,045 yards on 225 carries, proving himself capable of handling a heavy workload. Now he'll look to build on that performance, with Thompkins around as a speedy sidekick.

UConn will benefit from an offensive line that returns four starters from last year's solid unit, most notably tackle Matt Peart and guard/center Nino Leone.

As for the passing game, UConn has questions — beginning with who will start at quarterback. Sophomore Marvin Washington took first-team snaps in the spring, but Division II transfer Mike Beaudry will likely push him for the job. Redshirt freshman Steven Krajewski could get a chance as well.

Whoever wins the QB job won't have many experienced options to throw to, but look for transfer Ardell Brown, junior Keyion Dixon and redshirt freshman Heron Maurisseau to emerge.

DEFENSE The primary reason Randy Edsall's second stint at UConn has been such a disaster? Look no further than a defense that last fall set FBS records for most yards and points allowed per game. The Huskies allowed a staggering 617.4 yards per game (80.6 more per game than the next-worst team) and 50.4 points per game.

The good news: There's nowhere to go but up. The Huskies return nine defensive starters and should benefit from the maturation of a group of players who were thrown into key roles as true freshmen last fall and played like, well, freshmen.

Still, without any can't-miss additions, this unit might still rank toward the bottom of FBS once again. New defensive coordinator Lou Spanos has an impressive résumé, having worked for three NFL teams as well as UCLA and Alabama, but he'll have his hands full in Storrs.

Players to watch include safeties Tyler Coyle and Oneil Robinson, linebacker Kevon Jones, tackle Travis Jones and defensive end Eric Watts.

SPECIALISTS Placekicker could be a significant weakness, with Michael Tarbutt having transferred to Minnesota, but punter won't be an issue. Luke Magliozzi arrived in 2017 from Australia, where he had worked for several years as a plumber before deciding to give American football a try. In his redshirt freshman season last fall, Magliozzi, who will be 25 when the 2019 season starts, averaged 42.9 yards per punt. He might be UConn's best player, in addition to its most interesting one.

FINAL ANALYSIS After a 1–11 season that featured eight losses by at least 30 points, UConn has a long way to go until it can be competitive in the AAC. But if one of the quarterbacks emerges as a dependable option and some of the young defensive players grow after difficult debut seasons, the Huskies could take a meaningful step forward in 2019. UConn won't likely sniff a bowl game, but improvement in the right spots could at least generate hope for the future, at a time when fans don't have much of it.

Kevin Mensah

"If everything breaks the right way, they're going to try and be a physical run team, but they have so many areas of concern. It's a really tough job there."

— An opposing AAC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (6)			Returning Starters in Bold		
WR		Ardell Brown (Sr.)		87	Cameron Hairston (So.)
WR	23	**Keyion Dixon (Jr.)**		3	Garrison Burnett (So.)
WR	80	Heron Maurisseau (Fr.)		85	Justin Morehead (Jr.)
LT	74	**Ryan Van Demark (Jr.)**		79	Noel Brouse (Jr.)
LG	70	**Cam DeGeorge (Jr.)**		50	Dylan Niedrowski (Fr.)
C	56	**Nino Leone (Jr.)**		55	Stanley Hubbard III (So.)
RG	64	Christian Haynes (Fr.)		54	Robert Holmes (So.)
RT	65	**Matt Peart (Sr.)**		51	Peter Rooney (Fr.)
TE	91	Jay Rose (Jr.)		15	Donovan Williams (Sr.)
QB	7	Marvin Washington (So.)			Mike Beaudry (Jr.)
RB	34	**Kevin Mensah (Jr.)**		1	Art Thompkins (Sr.)
DEFENSE (9)					
DE	98	**Lwal Uguak (So.)**		95	Eric Watts (Fr.)
DT	57	**Travis Jones (So.)**			Michael Hinton (Sr.)
DT	52	**Caleb Thomas (So.)**		69	Ryan Fines (Sr.)
DE	97	**Jonathan Pace (So.)**		46	AJ Garson (Jr.)
OLB	44	Ian Swenson (So.)			D.J. Morgan (Jr.)
ILB	48	Kevon Jones (So.)		45	Ryan Gilmartin (Jr.)
OLB	6	**Eddie Hahn (Jr.)**		27	**Omar Fortt (Jr.)**
CB	14	**Tahj Herring-Wilson (Jr.)**		21	Jeremy Lucien (So.)
CB	39	**Ryan Carroll (So.)**		24	Keyshawn Paul (So.)
S	25	**Tyler Coyle (Jr.)**		13	Messiah Turner (So.)
S	17	Oneil Robinson (So.)		8	Jalon Ferrell (Fr.)
SPECIAL TEAMS					
K	49	Clayton Harris (Fr.)	**KR**	23	Keyion Dixon (Jr.)
P	99	Luke Magliozzi (So.)	**PR**	23	Keyion Dixon (Jr.)

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Marvin Washington, 24-9-147-3, 1 TD
Rushing: Kevin Mensah, 225 att., 1,045 yds., 6 TDs
Receiving: Zavier Scott, 33 rec., 228 yds., 1 TD
Tackles: Tyler Coyle, 109
Sacks: Kevon Jones, 2.5
Interceptions: Oneil Robinson, 2

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Randy Edsall
Record at School: 78-90 (14 years)
Career Record: 100-124 (18+ years)
Offensive Coordinator: Frank Giufre
Defensive Coordinator: Lou Spanos
Storrs, CT • Rentschler Field (40,000)

Connecticut Athletics

East Carolina **Pirates**

National Forecast: **109** • AAC East Prediction: **5** • Projected Record: **4-8, 1-7 AAC**

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	at NC State
Sept.	7	Gardner-Webb
Sept.	14	at Navy
Sept.	21	William & Mary
Sept.	28	at Old Dominion
Oct.	3	Temple
Oct.	19	at UCF
Oct.	26	South Florida
Nov.	2	Cincinnati
Nov.	9	at SMU
Nov.	23	at Connecticut
Nov.	30	Tulsa

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 3-9, 1-7 AAC

Sept.	2	North Carolina A&T	L	23-28
Sept.	8	North Carolina	W	41-19
Sept.	22	at South Florida	L	13-20
Sept.	29	Old Dominion	W	37-35
Oct.	6	at Temple	L	6-49
Oct.	13	Houston	L	20-42
Oct.	20	UCF	L	10-37
Nov.	3	Memphis	L	41-59
Nov.	10	at Tulane	L	18-24
Nov.	17	Connecticut	W	55-21
Nov.	23	at Cincinnati	L	6-56
Dec.	1	at NC State	L	3-58

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Traveon Freshwater, DE, Elizabeth City, NC
2. Demetrius Mauney, RB, Forest City, NC
3. Ja'Quan McMillian, CB, Winston-Salem, NC
4. Bryan Gagg, QB, Bradenton, FL
5. Immanuel Hickman, DE, Chesterfield, VA
6. Bailey Malovic, OT, Irmo, SC*
7. C.J. Johnson, WR, Greenville, NC
8. Juan Powell, CB, Atlanta, GA
9. Jeremy Lewis, DE, Greenville, NC
10. Malik Fleming, CB, Fairburn, GA

*junior college transfer

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	AAC	NATIONAL
Scoring	22.8 ppg	11	108
Rushing	129.7 ypg	11	112
Passing	284.8 ypg	2	20
Total	414.4 ypg	6	57
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**AAC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	37.3 ppg	11	120
Rushing	169.8 ypg	3	73
Passing	270.1 ypg	10	122
Total	439.8 ypg	9	101
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**AAC**	**NATIONAL**
-14	-1.17	11	127

STAT CORNER

6.1

ECU's defense allowed 1.6 fewer yards per play in 2018, down from 7.7 to 6.1. Unfortunately, 6.1 still ranked just 104th in FBS.

OFFENSE There's not the usual learning curve at East Carolina, where offensive coordinator/QB coach Donnie Kirkpatrick was on the Pirates' ship four years ago and has some familiarity with key parts of his unit. He also has some talent at his disposal, starting with sophomore quarterback and local hero Holton Ahlers. An established QB and a quality backup in junior Reid Herring are a luxury most retooling teams don't have.

New coach Mike Houston, however, doesn't want his QB to be the leading rusher as Ahlers was last year, and establishing physicality up front was a priority on offense in the spring. The Pirates will run spread shotgun and have their annual array of talented receivers, starting with veterans Deondre Farrier (30 receptions, 12.4-yard average) and Tahj Deans (18 for 10.4 average) as well as the next big thing — sophomore Leroy Henley.

ECU averaged just 129.7 rushing yards in 2018, and that included a 415-yard outburst against hapless UConn. Hussein Howe and Darius Pinnix each started three games, but Pinnix separated himself this spring. The backs will run behind a veteran line anchored by D'Ante Smith. Right tackle Matt Morgan needs to step up to protect lefty Ahlers' blindside.

"We're going to try to spread the field sideline to sideline and attack vertically in the passing game," says Houston. "And we're going to try to get downhill on people in the run game."

DEFENSE New coordinator and 40-year coaching vet Bob Trott's first full-time job was under Bill Parcells at Air Force, so he knows a little about building a solid defense. He had James Madison's 2018 defense ranked in the top 25 in FCS in 11 categories.

Trott received bad news in March when defensive end Nate Harvey's NCAA appeal for another year was denied. Harvey tied an AAC record with 14.5 sacks and set a conference record with 25 tackles for a loss. Vets Kendall Futrell, Alex Turner and Jalen Price all return up front in the new 4-2-5 set.

Linebacker Aaron Ramseur had 66 tackles, 5.5 for a loss, and Bruce Bivens added 61 stops. Coaches want to get hybrid Warren Saba on the field at Bandit where he can use his DB skills and athleticism.

Senior corner Colby Gore has started 29 games, but a host of incoming DBs are challenging for time. Free safety Davondre Robinson is another proven vet, but the pass defense was ranked 122nd, yielding 270.1 yards through the friendly skies.

SPECIALISTS All-AAC kicker Jake Verity hit 19-of-21 field goal attempts as a junior. Punter John Young averaged 40.5 yards and planted 13 inside the 20. There are high hopes for speedy Tyler Snead in the return game. Special teams coach Roy Tesh is a longtime Houston assistant. Last year, his JMU units were second in FCS in punt return average and third in kickoff return coverage.

FINAL ANALYSIS Houston has been successful at every stop, including winning the 2016 FCS national title at James Madison. His first task is changing a culture that has yielded three straight 3–9 seasons. He posted inspirational quotes as well as reminders of the program's proud past throughout the locker room. In the spring, the hitting was harder, the tackling surer and the attention to detail more noticeable. Houston could turn things around quickly, particularly with some of the talent already on board.

Holton Ahlers

"There was no energy on that team. They were flat from warm-ups to postgame. You don't want any coach to lose his job, but they needed an overhaul."

— An opposing AAC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

Returning Starters in Bold

OFFENSE (4)				
WR	1	Deondre Farrier (Sr.)	22	Tyler Snead (Fr.)
WR	8	Tahj Deans (Jr.)	19	Mydreon Vines (Jr.)
WR	10	Leroy Henley (So.)	11	Blake Proehl (So.)
LT	**67**	**D'Ante Smith (Sr.)**	79	Donovan Noel (Fr.)
LG	**70**	**Cortez Herrin (Sr.)**	75	Sean Bailey (Jr.)
C	**57**	**Peyton Winstead (So.)**	63	Jaison Fournet (Jr.)
RG	54	Branden Pena (Sr.)	61	Fernando Frye (Sr.)
RT	73	Matt Morgan (So.)		Bailey Malovic (Jr.)
TE	80	Anthony Watley (Sr.)		Zech Byrd (So.)
QB	12	Holton Ahlers (So.)	**9**	**Reid Herring (Jr.)**
RB	7	Darius Pinnix (Jr.)	6	Hussein Howe (Sr.)
DEFENSE (7)				
DE	**44**	**Kendall Futrell (Sr.)**	59	Chandon Hickerson (Jr.)
NT	**94**	**Alex Turner (Sr.)**	78	Chandler Medeiros (Fr.)
DT	**93**	**Jalen Price (Sr.)**	89	Raequan Purvis (Jr.)
DE	46	Chance Purvis (Jr.)	90	Dorian Hardy (Fr.)
ILB	**38**	**Bruce Bivens (Jr.)**	39	Delvontae Harris (So.)
ILB	**51**	**Aaron Ramseur (Jr.)**	37	Xavier Smith (So.)
BAN	17	Warren Saba (Jr.)	30	Gerard Stringer (So.)
CB	**26**	**Colby Gore (Sr.)**		Juan Powell (Fr.)
CB	2	Michael Witherspoon (Sr.)	23	Damel Hickman (Fr.)
SS	20	Nolan Johnson (So.)	27	Daniel Charles (So.)
FS	**13**	**Davondre Robinson (Jr.)**		Alex Angus (Fr.)
SPECIAL TEAMS				
K	9	Jake Verity (Sr.)	KR 10	Leroy Henley (So.)
P	43	Jonn Young (Jr.)	PR 22	Tyler Snead (Fr.)

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Holton Ahlers, 263-127-1,785-3, 12 TDs
Rushing: Holton Ahlers, 119 att., 592 yds., 6 TDs
Receiving: Deondre Farrier, 30 rec., 372 yds., 2 TDs
Tackles: Davondre Robinson, 77
Sacks: Kendall Futrell, Alex Turner, 4.0
Interceptions: 3 players tied with 1

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Mike Houston
Record at School: First Season
Career Record: 80-25 (8 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Donnie Kirkpatrick
Defensive Coordinator: Bob Trott
Greenville, NC • Dowdy-Ficklen Stadium (50,000)

East Carolina Athletics

Temple **Owls**

National Forecast: **78** • AAC East Prediction: **4** • Projected Record: **7-5, 4-4 AAC**

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	Bucknell
Sept.	14	Maryland
Sept.	21	at Buffalo
Sept.	28	Georgia Tech
Oct.	3	at East Carolina
Oct.	12	Memphis
Oct.	19	at SMU
Oct.	26	UCF
Nov.	7	at South Florida
Nov.	16	Tulane
Nov.	23	at Cincinnati
Nov.	30	Connecticut

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 8-5, 7-1 AAC

Sept.	1	Villanova	L	17-19
Sept.	8	Buffalo	L	29-36
Sept.	15	at Maryland	W	35-14
Sept.	20	Tulsa	W	31-17
Sept.	29	at Boston College	L	35-45
Oct.	6	East Carolina	W	49-6
Oct.	13	at Navy	W	24-17
Oct.	20	Cincinnati (ot)	W	24-17
Nov.	1	at UCF	L	40-52
Nov.	10	at Houston	W	59-49
Nov.	17	South Florida	W	27-17
Nov.	24	at Connecticut	W	57-7
Dec.	27	vs. Duke #	L	27-56

#Independence Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. M.J. Griffin, S, Ypsilanti, MI
2. Kennique Bonner-Steward, QB, Huntersville, NC
3. Thomas Joe-Kamara, S, Dayton, NJ
4. Kwesi Evans, WR, Parkville, MD
5. Re'Mahn Davis, RB, San Francisco, CA
6. Yvandy Rigby, LB, Egg Harbor Township, NJ
7. Mahmud Dioubate, DB, Philadelphia, PA*
8. Jacoby Sharpe, DE, Sugar Hill, GA
9. Jermaine Donaldson, OG, Voorhees, NJ
10. Wisdom Quarshie, DL, Sicklerville, NJ

*junior college transfer

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	AAC	NATIONAL
Scoring	34.9 ppg	4	23
Rushing	155.9 ypg	10	83
Passing	253.6 ypg	5	42
Total	409.5 ypg	7	61
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**AAC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	27.1 ppg	3	66
Rushing	185.2 ypg	5	86
Passing	187.4 ypg	2	20
Total	372.5 ypg	2	47
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**AAC**	**NATIONAL**
+6	+0.46	3	30

STAT CORNER

5

Including Manny Diaz, Temple has lost five head coaches to bigger jobs in nine years. That's both affirming and frustrating.

OFFENSE Quarterback Anthony Russo went 7–3 as the starter and became the third Owl ever to throw for 400 yards in a single game. Still, sophomore Todd Centeio, who played in 11 of 13 games, might get more time because of his dual-threat abilities.

New coach Rod Carey, who came from Northern Illinois, wants to run the ball. The most experienced back is senior Jager Gardner, who carried 65 times for 253 yards and a score last season. Jeremy Jennings, Jonny Forrest and Tyliek Raynor will all try to expand their roles. Redshirt freshman Kyle Dobbins could have an impact.

Isaiah Wright has scored four different ways in consecutive seasons (receiving, rushing, kick return and punt return), becoming the only FBS player to do so in the last decade. Branden Mack, who also blocked a punt that was recovered for a TD, led the team with five scoring catches.

The line is experienced but lacks depth. Matt Hennessy is one of the better centers in the AAC. Jovahn Fair was named to the all-conference second team. Adam Klein was the only freshman in the country to start at right tackle for at least nine games.

DEFENSE The linebacker unit is arguably one of the best anywhere and goes six deep. Shaun Bradley, one of four seniors in the group, was second on the team in tackles with 78. Chapelle Russell led the nation with five fumble recoveries. Sam Franklin had seven tackles for a loss.

New defensive coordinator Jeff Knowles served in the same role at NIU the last two seasons. In 2018, his Huskies finished second nationally with 50 sacks.

Up front, Dan Archibong has started 23 games the past two seasons. Quincy Roche, who has played in the Owls' last 26 games, had 57 tackles, six sacks and two blocked kicks. There are five redshirt freshmen who will be trying to work their way into the mix along the defensive front.

The secondary will be much stronger if cornerback Harrison Hand is ruled eligible by the NCAA after transferring back home to the Philadelphia area from Baylor (where he was recruited by former Owls coach Matt Rhule). Corner Linwood Crump and safety Benny Walls both had three interceptions.

SPECIALISTS Will Mobley went 11-for-15 filling in for the injured Adam Boumerhi (who has since left the program) and set a school record with 54 PATs. Junior college transfer Adam Barry is expected to take over the punting duties. Wright averaged 26.5 yards on kickoff returns and 13.1 on punt returns with two TDs, becoming the sixth player in program history to be named first-team All-America.

FINAL ANALYSIS For the second time in three years, the Owls lost a bowl game after their coach left for a job at a Power 5 school. This time it was Geoff Collins, who has moved on to Georgia Tech. Miami assistant Manny Diaz took the Owls job but returned to Miami several weeks later following Mark Richt's retirement. Enter Carey, who went 29–24 the last four years at Northern Illinois after starting 23–6.

The schedule has seven home games, including a late-September meeting with Georgia Tech, and a fifth straight bowl trip should be attainable. Anything more might be asking a bit too much in a transition situation.

Shaun Bradley

"I think with the new staff, they have to keep it really simple and keep preaching hard-nose ball. This isn't the MAC. You can use your size in this league."

— An opposing AAC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

Returning Starters in Bold

OFFENSE (7)				
WR	13	**Isaiah Wright (Sr.)**	80	Freddie Johnson (Jr.)
WR	88	**Branden Mack (Jr.)**	81	Randle Jones (Sr.)
LT	63	Isaac Moore (So.)	66	David Nwaogwugwu (Fr.)
LG	70	**Jovahn Fair (Sr.)**	72	J.D. Gomez (So.)
C	58	**Matt Hennessy (Jr.)**	50	Griffin Sestili (So.)
RG	76	**Vincent Picozzi (Jr.)**	66	Leon Pinto (Jr.)
RT	71	**Adam Klein (So.)**	66	David Nwaogwugwu (Fr.)
TE	84	Kenny Yeboah (Jr.)	37	David Martin-Robinson (Fr.)
QB	15	**Anthony Russo (Jr.)**	16	Todd Centeio (So.)
RB	21	Jager Gardner (Sr.)	22	Jeremy Jennings (So.)
RB	27	Jonny Forrest (Jr.)	34	Tyliek Raynor (Jr.)
DEFENSE (6)				
DE	90	Quincy Roche (Jr.)	47	Arnold Ebiketie (So.)
DT	95	**Dan Archibong (Jr.)**	88	Ifeanyi Maijeh (So.)
DT	92	Karamo Dioubate (Sr.)	56	Khris Banks (Fr.)
DE	17	Dana Levine (Sr.)	10	Zack Mesday (Sr.)
LB	36	**Sam Franklin (Sr.)**	30	Audley Isaacs (So.)
LB	5	**Shaun Bradley (Sr.)**	35	William Kwenkeu (Sr.)
LB	3	**Chapelle Russell (Sr.)**	19	Isaiah Graham-Mobley (Jr.)
CB	23	Harrison Hand (Jr.)	24	Kimere Brown (Jr.)
CB	11	**Linwood Crump (Sr.)**	14	Christian Braswell (So.)
SS	32	**Benny Walls (Sr.)**	39	George Reid (So.)
FS	20	Keyvone Bruton (Jr.)	16	DaeSean Winston (So.)
SPECIAL TEAMS				
K	91	Will Mobley (So.)	KR 13	Isaiah Wright (Sr.)
P		Adam Barry (Jr.)	PR 13	Isaiah Wright (Sr.)

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Anthony Russo, 345-198-2,563-14, 14 TDs
Rushing: Jager Gardner, 65 att., 253 yds., 1 TD
Receiving: Branden Mack, 44 rec., 601 yds., 5 TDs
Tackles: Shaun Bradley, 78
Sacks: Quincy Roche, 6.0
Interceptions: Linwood Crump, Benny Walls, 3

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Rod Carey
Record at School: First Season
Career Record: 52-30 (7 years)
Offensive Coordinators: Mike Uremovich, Thad Ward
Defensive Coordinators: Fran Brown, Jeff Knowles
Philadelphia, PA • Lincoln Financial Field (68,532)

Temple Athletics

UCF **Knights**

National Forecast: **22** • AAC East Prediction: **1** • Projected Record: **10-3, 6-2 AAC**

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	29	Florida A&M
Sept.	7	at Florida Atlantic
Sept.	14	Stanford
Sept.	21	at Pittsburgh
Sept.	28	Connecticut
Oct.	4	at Cincinnati
Oct.	19	East Carolina
Oct.	26	at Temple
Nov.	2	Houston
Nov.	8	at Tulsa
Nov.	23	at Tulane
Nov.	29	South Florida

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 12-1, 8-0 AAC

Aug.	30	at Connecticut	W	56-17
Sept.	8	South Carolina State	W	38-0
Sept.	21	Florida Atlantic	W	56-36
Sept.	29	Pittsburgh	W	45-14
Oct.	6	SMU	W	48-20
Oct.	13	at Memphis	W	31-30
Oct.	20	at East Carolina	W	37-10
Nov.	1	Temple	W	52-40
Nov.	10	Navy	W	35-24
Nov.	17	Cincinnati	W	38-13
Nov.	23	at South Florida	W	38-10
Dec.	1	Memphis #	W	56-41
Jan.	1	vs. LSU %	L	32-40

#AAC Championship %Fiesta Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Tre'Mon Morris-Brash, DE, Washington, DC
2. Keenan Hester, DT, St. Petersburg, FL
3. Dallaz Corbitt, DE, Columbia, SC
4. Damarius Good, ATH, Altamonte Springs, FL
5. Dillon Gabriel, QB, Mililani, HI
6. Adrian Medley, OT, Pensacola, FL
7. Raymond Cutts, LB, Orlando, FL
8. Jarrad Baker, CB, Melbourne, FL
9. Justin Menard, WR, McDonough, GA
10. Jalen Pinkney, DE, Norcross, GA*

*junior college transfer

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	AAC	NATIONAL
Scoring	43.2 ppg	2	6
Rushing	265.2 ypg	3	8
Passing	257.5 ypg	4	37
Total	522.7 ypg	2	5
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**AAC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	22.7 ppg	2	36
Rushing	222.3 ypg	9	118
Passing	211.4 ypg	5	49
Total	433.7 ypg	8	95
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**AAC**	**NATIONAL**
+14	+1.08	1	3

STAT CORNER

20.1

The tempo didn't go away when Josh Heupel came to town. UCF averaged one play every 20.1 seconds, second fastest in FBS.

OFFENSE A year earlier than expected, UCF has a quarterback battle on its hands. The McKenzie Milton era will pause — at least for a year — while the back-to-back AAC Offensive Player of the Year continues to recover from a gruesome leg injury suffered late last season. Darriel Mack Jr. started the final two games of 2018 and showed promise with an MVP performance of 348 yards passing and six combined touchdowns in the conference championship game, but he was humbled a bit in the bowl game. To add experience to the competition, UCF brought in former Notre Dame quarterback Brandon Wimbush as a graduate transfer. Wimbush adds maturity and a great deal of success — he was 13–3 as the starter with the Irish.

Whoever wins the QB battle will have a bevy of talent surrounding him.

The Knights are a solid three-deep at running back with Greg McCrae, Adrian Killins Jr. and Otis Anderson, each of whom brings a different skill set. A former walk-on, McCrae emerged out of the shadows to rush for 1,182 yards last season. Killins is among the fastest players in the nation, always a touchdown threat when he touches the ball. Anderson's official listed position is "utility" as he'll be used not only as a rusher but also as a slot receiver.

Wide receiver is also expected to be a strength thanks to the return of All-AAC selection Gabriel Davis, a big outside threat who has a knack for making tough catches.

The offensive line returns largely intact with considerable experience among four of the five starters.

DEFENSE UCF welcomes back the bulk of its secondary, including returning starters Richie Grant, Nevelle Clarke and Brandon Moore. Grant has matured into UCF's best overall defender, tallying a team-leading 109 tackles and six interceptions a season ago. Clarke and Moore, with 38 starts between them, could comprise the AAC's best cornerback duo.

Defensive line will be the big question mark, as Brendon Hayes is the only returnee with significant experience. The Knights will lean on continued growth from younger players such as Randy Charlton but are also prepared to play a host of newcomers, as there are eight new additions. On the inside, former Virginia Tech signee Cam Goode could be one to watch, while Jalen Pinkney, by way of junior college, is expected to see immediate action at end.

At linebacker, Nate Evans emerged as a defensive star last season, overcoming initial backup status to blossom into an All-AAC first-team performer with 99 tackles and 10 TFLs.

SPECIALISTS It'll be a new-look unit with fresh faces at placekicker, punter and long snapper. Competition at kicker and punter will likely last until the beginning of the season, with a possibility that both roles could ultimately be handed to freshmen.

FINAL ANALYSIS First-year coach Josh Heupel followed Scott Frost's perfect season with another undefeated regular season, though this time UCF lost in the bowl game. The offense continued to put up huge numbers as the Knights again were among the nation's leaders in scoring and total yards. Even with a new starter at quarterback and some questions defensively, UCF's overall talent level will still allow it to compete for another AAC championship and New Year's Six bowl.

Greg McCrae

"Absolutely the best team in the league. They're athletic everywhere; they've recruited Power 5 talent to the positions our schools struggle with the most."

— An opposing AAC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

Returning Starters in Bold

OFFENSE (7)				
WR	13	**Gabriel Davis (Jr.)**		Jarrad Baker (Fr.)
WR	16	**Tre Nixon (Jr.)**	84	Ke'Von Ahmad (Fr.)
WR	17	Marlon Williams (Jr.)	2	**Otis Anderson (Jr.)**
LT	77	**Jake Brown (Sr.)**	79	Trevor Elbert (Sr.)
LG	73	Samuel Jackson (So.)	56	Lamarius Benson (Fr.)
C	72	**Jordan Johnson (Sr.)**	58	Eric Seidelman (Fr.)
RG	65	**Cole Schneider (So.)**	61	Parker Boudreaux (Jr.)
RT	60	Josh McMullen (Sr.)	62	Edward Collins (Fr.)
TE	88	Jake Hescock (Jr.)	86	Jonathon MacCollister (So.)
QB	3	Brandon Wimbush (Sr.)	8	Darriel Mack Jr. (So.)
RB	30	Greg McCrae (Jr.)	9	**Adrian Killins Jr. (Sr.)**

DEFENSE (5)				
DE	6	**Brendon Hayes (Sr.)**		Jalen Pinkney (Jr.)
DT	7	Kenny Turnier (Jr.)	97	Mason Cholewa (So.)
DT	54	Cam Goode (Fr.)		Noah Hancock (Jr.)
DE	58	Randy Charlton (So.)		Tre'Mon Morris-Brash (Fr.)
LB	44	**Nate Evans (Sr.)**	28	Shawn Burgess-Becker (Sr.)
LB	40	Eriq Gilyard (So.)	22	Kalia Davis (So.)
LB	12	Eric Mitchell (Jr.)	29	Jeremiah Jean-Baptiste (Fr.)
CB	20	**Brandon Moore (Jr.)**	23	Tay Gowan (Jr.)
CB	14	**Nevelle Clarke (Sr.)**	31	Aaron Robinson (Jr.)
S	27	**Richie Grant (Jr.)**	37	Derek Gainous (So.)
S	3	Antwan Collier (Jr.)	11	Jordan Hayes (Sr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS					
K		Daniel Obarski (Fr.)	KR	9	Adrian Killins Jr. (Sr.)
P	99	Alan Kervin (Fr.)	PR	2	Otis Anderson (Jr.)

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Darriel Mack Jr., 100-51-619-1, 3 TDs
Rushing: Greg McCrae, 133 att., 1,182 yds., 10 TDs
Receiving: Gabriel Davis, 53 rec., 815 yds., 7 TDs
Tackles: Richie Grant, 109
Sacks: Brendon Hayes, 3.0
Interceptions: Richie Grant, 6

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Josh Heupel
Record at School: 12-1 (1 year)
Career Record: 12-1 (1 year)
Offensive Coordinator: Josh Heupel
Defensive Coordinator: Randy Shannon
Orlando, FL • Spectrum Stadium (44,206)

UCF Athletics

USF **Bulls**

National Forecast: **77** • AAC East Prediction: **3** • Projected Record: **6-6, 5-3 AAC**

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	30	Wisconsin
Sept.	7	at Georgia Tech
Sept.	14	South Carolina State
Sept.	28	SMU
Oct.	5	at Connecticut
Oct.	12	BYU
Oct.	19	at Navy
Oct.	26	at East Carolina
Nov.	7	Temple
Nov.	16	Cincinnati
Nov.	23	Memphis
Nov.	29	at UCF

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 7-6, 3-5 AAC

Sept.	1	Elon	W	34-14
Sept.	8	Georgia Tech	W	49-38
Sept.	15	vs. Illinois #	W	25-19
Sept.	22	East Carolina	W	20-13
Oct.	6	at Massachusetts	W	58-42
Oct.	12	at Tulsa	W	25-24
Oct.	20	Connecticut	W	38-30
Oct.	27	at Houston	L	36-57
Nov.	3	Tulane	L	15-41
Nov.	10	at Cincinnati	L	23-35
Nov.	17	at Temple	L	17-27
Nov.	23	UCF	L	10-38
Dec.	20	vs. Marshall %	L	20-38

#Chicago %Gasparilla Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. McArthur Burnett, CB, Pahokee, FL*
2. Jahquez Evans, QB, Atlanta, GA
3. Darius Williams, OLB, Miami, FL
4. Daquan Evans, CB, Orlando, FL
5. Raymond Collins, OT, Largo, FL
6. Thomas Nance, DE, Eagle Lake, FL
7. Matthew McDuffie, OT, Glen Saint Mary, FL
8. Dustyn Hall, OG, Punta Gorda, FL
9. Tyrik Jones, DE, Fort Lauderdale, FL*
10. Logan Berryhill, WR, Kingsland, GA

*junior college transfer

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	AAC	NATIONAL
Scoring	28.5 ppg	7	70
Rushing	193.6 ypg	9	43
Passing	244.1 ypg	6	55
Total	437.7 ypg	5	33
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**AAC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	32.0 ppg	7	95
Rushing	247.5 ypg	11	123
Passing	199.1 ypg	4	35
Total	446.6 ypg	10	104
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**AAC**	**NATIONAL**
-1	-0.08	8	73

STAT CORNER

-18.3

USF's average scoring margin regressed from plus-14.8 in 2017 to minus-3.5 in '18, an 18.3-point shift that was fifth worst in FBS.

OFFENSE Seeking more diversity and productivity, South Florida coach Charlie Strong hired Kerwin Bell, the head coach of Valdosta State's 2018 Division II national title team, to coordinate the Bulls offense. And Bell has inherited some weapons.

Quarterback Blake Barnett, once a five-star recruit, played sparingly in his previous stops at Alabama and Arizona State. But he proved to be a major find in his first USF season. He's a classic drop-back passer who engineered three fourth quarter-comebacks, all from double-digit deficits.

Barnett's top target figures to be sophomore Randall St. Felix, who had an electrifying 165 yards on six catches in the Gasparilla Bowl. But the key to the offense might be Mitchell Wilcox, a senior tight end who was haunted by injuries but often looked like USF's best overall performer.

The Bulls' best moments came on the ground. Jordan Cronkrite had several spectacular moments, including a 302-yard effort at UMass that ranked as the fourth-best single-game total for an FBS player from a team in Florida. Cronkrite sputtered down the stretch, partly due to the emergence of mighty-mite Johnny Ford, a 5'5", 168-pound speedster who rushed for 787 yards, eight TDs and 6.8 yards per carry as a freshman. Ford could see time at receiver.

The offensive line returns plenty of experience, but it also has plenty to prove. It was wildly inconsistent, especially in the passing game, where it surrendered 21 sacks during the final six games.

DEFENSE The Bulls took a major step backward in Strong's second season, ranking 104th in total defense and allowing 446.6 yards per game. USF is looking for leaders, and senior defensive end Greg Reaves might be a good place to start. He's back at his natural position after spending time at linebacker, due to injuries at the position. Reaves is a maximum-effort performer who makes things happen.

The Bulls would love a healthy Nico Sawtelle at middle linebacker. After starting 18 consecutive games, Sawtelle missed the final seven last season with a neck/shoulder injury. Not coincidentally, the defense headed south in Sawtelle's absence.

Junior Mike Hampton has the most experience in the secondary, which was torched far too often.

SPECIALISTS Coby Weiss enjoyed a productive debut season, converting 15-of-his 18 field goal attempts. But his longest make was 38 yards, and he missed four PAT attempts. Australian-born punter Trent Schneider had a 42.9-yard average, including a program record-tying 72-yarder. The return game gets a huge boost with the return of Terrence Horne Jr., who had two touchdowns on kickoff returns against Georgia Tech before suffering a season-ending injury.

FINAL ANALYSIS The Bulls began the 2018 season 7–0 to equal the best start in program history, then promptly dropped their final six games, including a humbling 38–20 defeat in the Gasparilla Bowl against Marshall in USF's home stadium. No team in college football history ever suffered that monumental a collapse. Were the Bulls really that good (7–0)? Or were they really that bad (0–6)? The offensive playmakers are there. The defense must drastically improve, though, or else the Bulls are looking at more mediocrity instead of realistic AAC title contention.

Blake Barnett

"They're sloppy, and they need to work on their discipline. They have players, but they're a step off from the top programs in the league."

— An opposing AAC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

Returning Starters in Bold

OFFENSE (9)				
WR	5	**Randall St. Felix (So.)**	18	DeVontres Dukes (Jr.)
WR	86	**Stanley Clerveaux (Sr.)**	82	Zion Roland (So.)
WR	20	Johnny Ford (So.)	13	Eddie McDoom (Jr.)
LT	78	**William Atterbury (Sr.)**	71	Jeremiah Stafford (So.)
LG	64	**Demetris Harris (So.)**	75	Jean Marcellus (So.)
C	74	**Brad Cecil (So.)**	52	Michael Wiggs (Jr.)
RG	73	Donovan Jennings (So.)	67	Hal Roberson (Sr.)
RT	77	**Marcus Norman (Sr.)**	76	Jarrett Hopple (Jr.)
TE	89	**Mitchell Wilcox (Sr.)**	85	Jacob Mathis (Jr.)
QB	11	**Blake Barnett (Sr.)**	12	Jordan McCloud (Fr.)
RB	2	**Jordan Cronkrite (Sr.)**	20	Johnny Ford (So.)
DEFENSE (6)				
DE	4	**Greg Reaves (Sr.)**	45	Darrien Grant (So.)
DT	90	**Kevin Kegler (Jr.)**	93	Tyrone Barber (So.)
DT	96	Kelvin Pinkney Jr. (Jr.)	91	Rashawn Yates (So.)
DE	94	**Kirk Livingstone (Sr.)**	40	Jason Vaughn (Fr.)
SLB	44	Antonio Grier (So.)	38	Randall Copeland (Fr.)
MLB	54	**Nico Sawtelle (Sr.)**	59	Andrew Mims (So.)
WLB	11	Dwayne Boyles (So.)	58	Trey Laing (Fr.)
CB	7	**Mike Hampton (Jr.)**	21	McArthur Burnett (Jr.
CB	20	Bentlee Sanders (So.)	10	Daquan Evans (Fr.)
SS	24	**Nick Roberts (So.)**	28	Brock Nichols (Jr.
FS	22	Mekhi LaPointe (So.)	26	Keyon Helont (Fr.)
SPECIAL TEAMS				
K	24	Coby Weiss (Jr.)	KR 80	Terrence Horne Jr. (Fr.)
P	39	Trent Schneider (Jr.)	PR 20	Johnny Ford (So.)

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Blake Barnett, 350-214-2,710-11, 12 TDs
Rushing: Jordan Cronkrite, 184 att., 1,121 yds., 9 TDs
Receiving: Mitchell Wilcox, 43 rec., 540 yds., 2 TDs
Tackles: Greg Reaves, 89
Sacks: Kirk Livingstone, 4.0
Interceptions: Nick Roberts, 3

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Charlie Strong
Record at School: 17-8 (2 years)
Career Record: 70-45 (9+ years)
Offensive Coordinator: Kerwin Bell
Defensive Coordinator: Brian Jean-Mary
Tampa, FL • Raymond James Stadium (65,618)

USF Athletics

Houston **Cougars**

National Forecast: **53** • AAC West Prediction: **2** • Projected Record: **8-4, 6-2 AAC**

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	at Oklahoma
Sept.	7	Prairie View A&M
Sept.	13	Washington State #
Sept.	19	at Tulane
Sept.	28	at North Texas
Oct.	12	Cincinnati
Oct.	19	at Connecticut
Oct.	24	SMU
Nov.	2	at UCF
Nov.	16	Memphis
Nov.	23	at Tulsa
Nov.	30	Navy

#NRG Stadium

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 8-5, 5-3 AAC

Sept.	1	at Rice	W	45-27
Sept.	8	Arizona	W	45-18
Sept.	15	at Texas Tech	L	49-63
Sept.	22	Texas Southern	W	70-14
Oct.	4	Tulsa	W	41-26
Oct.	13	at East Carolina	W	42-20
Oct.	20	at Navy	W	49-36
Oct.	27	South Florida	W	57-36
Nov.	3	at SMU	L	31-45
Nov.	10	Temple	L	49-59
Nov.	15	Tulane	W	48-17
Nov.	23	at Memphis	L	31-52
Dec.	22	vs. Army #	L	14-70

#Armed Forces Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Nelson Caeser, LB, Missouri City, TX
2. Taures Payne, DE, Hoover, AL*
3. Ke'Andre Street, WR, Tyler, TX
4. Damarion Williams, CB, Atlanta, GA*
5. Cam'Ron Johnson, OT, Houston, TX
6. Rodquice Chaney, OT, Houston, TX
7. Ronald Nunnery, DB, Pearland, TX
8. Atlias Bell, DT, New Orleans, LA*
9. Olivier Charles-Pierre, DT, Laval, QC*
10. Justin Harris, DE, Gonzales, LA*

*junior college transfer

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	AAC	NATIONAL
Scoring	43.9 ppg	1	5
Rushing	217.1 ypg	6	24
Passing	295.5 ypg	1	16
Total	512.5 ypg	3	7
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**AAC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	37.2 ppg	10	119
Rushing	221.3 ypg	8	115
Passing	275.5 ypg	11	124
Total	496.8 ypg	11	127
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**AAC**	**NATIONAL**
+5	+0.38	4	35

STAT CORNER

57.8

In eight wins, Houston allowed just 5.3 yards per play and 24.3 points per game. In five losses: 7.1 and 57.8, respectively.

OFFENSE Houston turned to a familiar name in the offseason, hiring Dana Holgorsen to a five-year contract worth $20 million — the richest deal ever for a non-power conference school. Holgorsen's calling card at every stop has been offense, and that again should be the case as Houston is returning most of its skill players from a unit that was among the top 10 nationally in scoring (43.9 ppg) and total offense (512.5 ypg). Holgorsen plans to handle the play calling, with an attack that is expected to include everything from variations of the Air Raid to ground-and-pound.

A breakout season ended prematurely for quarterback D'Eriq King, who missed the final two-plus games with a torn meniscus in his right knee. Before the injury, King was responsible for 50 touchdowns, the most in FBS, and had thrown for nearly 3,000 yards while rushing for 674. He was cleared in the spring and says his knee feels "100 percent."

The top three targets in the passing game return, led by Marquez Stevenson, who bounced back from two injury-plagued years for a career-high 75 catches for 1,019 yards and nine touchdowns. With Stevenson, Keith Corbin and Courtney Lark, the Cougars possess the type of speed that should flourish in Holgorsen's fast-paced system.

Kyle Porter, a transfer from Texas, is expected to challenge for the No. 1 running back duties with Patrick Carr (868 yards last season).

The departure of Will Noble, a four-year starter at center, is a concern. Braylon Jones will get first crack to replace him after 30 career starts at guard.

DEFENSE Ravaged by injuries a year ago, Houston is coming off one of the worst statistical seasons in school history, setting program records for points allowed (483), total yards (6,454) and rushing touchdowns (42). Holgorsen hired Joe Cauthen, known for his attacking style at Arkansas State, as the defensive coordinator. Houston will switch from a three-man to four-man front to stop the run and get some inside pressure. Gone are Ed Oliver, a consensus All-American at defensive tackle, and top tacklers Austin Robinson and Roman Brown at linebacker.

Isaiah Chambers got off to a hot start with 4.5 sacks before missing the final eight games with a knee injury. He'll be joined by veterans Payton Turner, David Anenih, Leroy Godfrey and Aymiel Fleming and a half-dozen junior college transfers up front.

The linebacking corps will have three new starters, and there is concern at cornerback with graduation and injuries taking a toll. Damarion Williams, a junior college All-American, will provide immediate help at corner. Safety is a strength with Gleson Sprewell and Deontay Anderson.

SPECIALISTS Both specialists return in punter Dane Roy (42.1-yard average) and placekicker Dalton Witherspoon, who was 7-of-9 on field goals and made all 72 extra points.

FINAL ANALYSIS How many points the Cougars score may not matter if they cannot solve their defensive issues. Houston learned how difficult things could be when King went down with an injury and spent the offseason emphasizing ways for him to protect himself. A seventh straight bowl appearance is likely, but can Houston contend in the AAC West Division? Some answers could come early thanks to a grueling nonconference schedule.

D'Eriq King

"I think Dana (Holgorsen) will tear up that offense and run out of the spread. They didn't look cohesive at all last year, and there was no team culture."

— An opposing AAC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (8) — Returning Starters in Bold

WR	5	**Marquez Stevenson (Jr.)**	10	Jeremy Singleton (So.)
WR	2	**Keith Corbin (Sr.)**	17	Terry Mark (Sr.)
WR	9	**Courtney Lark (Sr.)**	1	Bryson Smith (So.)
LT	74	**Josh Jones (Sr.)**	73	Kameron Lewis (Fr.)
LG	77	Keenan Murphy (Jr.)	71	Max Banes (Fr.)
C	52	**Braylon Jones (Sr.)**	75	Jack Freeman (Fr.)
RG	64	Dennis Bardwell (Jr.)	71	Max Banes (Fr.)
RT	62	**Jarrid Williams (Sr.)**	73	Kameron Lewis (Fr.)
TE	89	Parker Eichenberger (So.)	85	Christian Trahan (So.)
QB	4	**D'Eriq King (Sr.)**	3	Clayton Tune (So.)
RB		Kyle Porter (Jr.)	21	**Patrick Carr (Sr.)**

DEFENSE (5)

DE	94	Isaiah Chambers (Jr.)	98	**Payton Turner (Jr.)**
DT	50	**Aymiel Fleming (Sr.)**	31	Derek Parish (So.)
DT	99	Blake Young (Sr.)	90	Olivier Charles-Pierre (Jr.)
DE	4	**Leroy Godfrey (Sr.)**	12	David Anenih (Jr.)
LB	26	Elijah Gooden (Jr.)	24	Donavan Mutin (So.)
LB	42	Terrance Edgeston (Jr.)	40	Jordan Carmouche (Jr.)
LB	3	Grant Stuard (Jr.)	45	Jordan Milburn (Sr.)
CB	22	Damarion Williams (Jr.)	25	D.J. Small (Jr.)
CB	16	Ka'Darian Smith (Sr.)	35	Johnathan Phenix (Fr.)
S	21	**Gleson Sprewell (Jr.)**	27	Amaud Willis-Dalton (So.)
S	2	**Deontay Anderson (Jr.)**	29	Darius Gilbert (Sr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	47	Dalton Witherspoon (Jr.)	KR	5	Marquez Stevenson (Jr.)
P	38	Dane Roy (Sr.)	PR	1	Bryson Smith (So.)

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: D'Eriq King, 345-219-2,982-6, 36 TDs
Rushing: Patrick Carr, 152 att., 868 yds., 5 TDs
Receiving: Marquez Stevenson, 75 rec., 1,019 yds., 9 TDs
Tackles: Gleson Sprewell, 81
Sacks: Isaiah Chambers, 4.5
Interceptions: Gleson Sprewell, 3

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Dana Holgorsen
Record at School: First Season
Career Record: 61-41 (8 years)
Offensive Coordinators: Marquel Blackwell, Brandon Jones
Defensive Coordinators: Doug Belk, Joe Cauthen
Houston, TX • TDECU Stadium (40,000)

Houston Athletics

Memphis **Tigers**

National Forecast: **49** • AAC West Prediction: **1** • Projected Record: **9-4, 6-2 AAC**

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	Ole Miss
Sept.	7	Southern
Sept.	14	at South Alabama
Sept.	26	Navy
Oct.	5	at ULM
Oct.	12	at Temple
Oct.	19	Tulane
Oct.	26	at Tulsa
Nov.	2	SMU
Nov.	16	at Houston
Nov.	23	at South Florida
Nov.	29	Cincinnati

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 8-6, 5-3 AAC

Sept.	1	Mercer	W	66-14
Sept.	8	at Navy	L	21-22
Sept.	14	Georgia State	W	59-22
Sept.	22	South Alabama	W	52-35
Sept.	28	at Tulane	L	24-40
Oct.	6	Connecticut	W	55-14
Oct.	13	UCF	L	30-31
Oct.	20	at Missouri	L	33-65
Nov.	3	at East Carolina	W	59-41
Nov.	10	Tulsa	W	47-21
Nov.	16	at SMU	W	28-18
Nov.	23	Houston	W	52-31
Dec.	1	at UCF #	L	41-56
Dec.	22	vs. Wake Forest %L		34-37

#AAC Championship %Birmingham Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Cole Mashburn, DE, Norman, OK
2. Jalil Clemons, DE, Starkville, MS
3. Ja'Len Sims, LB, Birmingham, AL
4. Joseph Honeysucker, LB, Nashville, TN
5. Rodney Owens, S, Nashville, TN*
6. Jashon Watkins-Perkins, DB, Nashville, TN
7. Rodrigues Clark, RB, Starkville, MS
8. Everitt Cunningham, DE, West Point, MS*
9. Sheldon Layman, QB, Mobile, AL
10. Brian Thomas, OT, Baton Rouge, LA*

*junior college transfer

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	AAC	NATIONAL
Scoring	42.9 ppg	3	7
Rushing	279.9 ypg	1	4
Passing	243.2 ypg	7	57
Total	523.1 ypg	1	4
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**AAC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	31.9 ppg	6	94
Rushing	171.8 ypg	4	76
Passing	256.4 ypg	8	105
Total	428.1 ypg	6	89
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**AAC**	**NATIONAL**
+4	+0.29	6	44

STAT CORNER

3.5

Memphis games were big-play havens: The Tigers averaged 3.5 gains per game of 30-plus yards (fifth) and allowed 2.5 (88th).

OFFENSE Memphis coach Mike Norvell lost two of his most productive players after last season as running backs Darrell Henderson and Tony Pollard opted to declare for the NFL Draft. They leave some gaping holes.

Norvell will look to Patrick Taylor Jr. to shoulder much of the offensive load. He gained 1,122 rushing yards and scored 16 touchdowns on the ground last season, in addition to catching 17 passes for 197 yards and two TDs.

At quarterback, Brady White returns after passing for nearly 3,300 yards and 26 touchdowns. A transfer from Arizona State, he led the Tigers to their second straight AAC title game and could take them to a third.

There may not be a better receiver in the AAC than Damonte Coxie, who joined Isaac Bruce and Anthony Miller as the only 1,000-yard receivers in program history. Tight end Joey Magnifico had five TD receptions and averaged a team-leading 17.3 yards per catch.

The offensive line has been re-tooled. Returnee Dustin Woodard moves over from guard to center, and highly regarded Obinna Eze moves into a starting role at left tackle. The other returning starter, Dylan Parham, will remain at his left guard spot.

DEFENSE The line returns three of its four starters and could get a boost from junior college All-American Everitt Cunningham, an adept pass rusher. Three-year starter Jonathan Wilson is the group's veteran. He tied for second on the team with six sacks. O'Bryan Goodson was injured in the Birmingham Bowl and missed most of the spring but should be healthy by the start of the season. Bryce Huff led the Tigers in tackles for a loss (19) and sacks (9.5) and tied for the lead in quarterback hurries (seven).

New defensive coordinator Adam Fuller has been adamant since his arrival that his unit will play "fast, tough and smart." Much of that falls to the linebackers, a group led by senior Austin Hall. Hall is coming off a year in which he had nine tackles for a loss and two fumble recoveries.

The defensive backfield returns two starters in cornerback T.J. Carter and strong safety Tyrez Lindsey. Carter, a junior, has started since his true freshman season and should emerge as the group's leader because of his work ethic and success. Newcomer John Broussard, an Auburn transfer, could work his way into a starting cornerback spot opposite Carter.

SPECIALISTS Pollard departs having tied an NCAA record with seven kickoff return TDs. His replacement could be one of several players, among them running back Kenneth Gainwell and receiver Calvin Austin III. Pop Williams is back to handle the punt returns after averaging 10.8 yards on 29 returns with a TD. Placekicker Riley Patterson is back for his third season, and Adam Williams returns as punter.

FINAL ANALYSIS Despite significant losses, Norvell should have enough experience and talent to lead the Tigers to their third straight AAC title game. White-to-Coxie should be a lethal combination this season for the offense, which also will get contributions from Taylor and Magnifico. Defensively, the Tigers must find a way to protect second-half leads, a shortcoming that cost them a year ago. Norvell's biggest challenge may be meshing the newcomers in staff meetings. The Tigers have seven new assistant coaches this season, including all three coordinators.

Brady White

"They look a little bit more dangerous every year because they're fitting recruiting with their identity in a good area of the country."

— An opposing AAC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (7)				Returning Starters in Bold
WR	10	**Damonte Coxie (Jr.)**	13	Kedarian Jones (Sr.)
WR	9	**Pop Williams (Sr.)**	25	Tre'Veon Hamilton (Sr.)
WR	14	Antonio Gibson (Sr.)	84	Calvin Austin III (So.)
LT	77	Obinna Eze (So.)	73	Titus Jones (Fr.)
LG	56	**Dylan Parham (So.)**	55	Mikhail Hill (So.)
C	53	**Dustin Woodard (Sr.)**	74	Isaac Ellis (Fr.)
RG	67	Manuel Orona-Lopez (Jr.)	71	Evan Fields (Fr.)
RT	79	Scottie Dill (Sr.)	52	Peyton Jones (Sr.)
TE	86	**Joey Magnifico (Sr.)**	5	**Sean Dykes (Sr.)**
QB	3	**Brady White (Jr.)**	4	Brady McBride (Fr.)
RB	6	Patrick Taylor Jr. (Sr.)	19	Kenneth Gainwell (Fr.)
DEFENSE (8)				
DE	38	**Jonathan Wilson (Sr.)**	5	Everitt Cunningham (Jr.)
DT	55	**Bryce Huff (Sr.)**	48	Wardalis Ducksworth (Jr.)
NG	1	**O'Bryan Goodson (Jr.)**	90	John Tate IV (Jr.)
DT	94	Joseph Dorceus (Jr.)	46	Cole Mashburn (Fr.)
LB	25	**Austin Hall (Sr.)**	16	Nehemiah Augustus (Jr.)
LB	23	**JJ Russell (Jr.)**	42	Xavier Cullens (So.)
LB	35	Tim Hart (Jr.)	4	**Josh Perry (Jr.)**
CB	2	**T.J. Carter (Jr.)**	9	John Broussard (Jr.)
CB	31	Chris Claybrooks (Jr.)	32	Jacobi Francis (Jr.)
S	22	**Tyrez Lindsey (Jr.)**	41	Sanchez Blake Jr. (So.)
S	12	La'Andre Thomas (So.)	29	Carlito Gonzalez (So.)
SPECIAL TEAMS				
K	36	Riley Patterson (Jr.)	KR 19	Kenneth Gainwell (Fr.)
P	48	Adam Williams (So.)	PR 9	Pop Williams (Sr.)

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Brady White, 392-246-3,296-9, 26 TDs
Rushing: Patrick Taylor Jr., 208 att., 1,122 yds., 16 TDs
Receiving: Damonte Coxie, 72 rec., 1,174 yds., 7 TDs
Tackles: Tyrez Lindsey, 71
Sacks: Bryce Huff, 9.5
Interceptions: T.J. Carter, 2

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Mike Norvell
Record at School: 26-14 (3 years)
Career Record: 26-14 (3 years)
Offensive Coordinators: Kevin Johns, Ryan Silverfield
Defensive Coordinator: Adam Fuller
Memphis, TN • Liberty Bowl (58,325)

Joe Murphy

Navy **Midshipmen**

National Forecast: **102** • AAC West Prediction: **5** • Projected Record: **5-7, 4-4 AAC**

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	Holy Cross
Sept.	14	East Carolina
Sept.	26	at Memphis
Oct.	5	Air Force
Oct.	12	at Tulsa
Oct.	19	South Florida
Oct.	26	Tulane
Nov.	1	at Connecticut
Nov.	16	at Notre Dame
Nov.	23	SMU
Nov.	30	at Houston
Dec.	14	vs. Army #

#Philadelphia, PA

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 3-10, 2-6 AAC

Sept.	1	at Hawaii	L	41-59
Sept.	8	Memphis	W	22-21
Sept.	15	Lehigh	W	51-21
Sept.	22	at SMU (ot)	L	30-31
Oct.	6	at Air Force	L	7-35
Oct.	13	Temple	L	17-24
Oct.	20	Houston	L	36-49
Oct.	27	vs. Notre Dame #	L	22-44
Nov.	3	at Cincinnati	L	0-42
Nov.	10	at UCF	L	24-35
Nov.	17	Tulsa	W	37-29
Nov.	24	at Tulane	L	28-29
Dec.	8	vs. Army %	L	10-17

#San Diego %Philadelphia

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Tausili Fiatoa, OLB, Kahuku, HI
2. BJ Gibson, S, Marietta, GA
3. Tyler King, ILB, Gibsonia, PA
4. Sean Simms, FB, Dallas, TX
5. Kendel Taylor, RB, Southfield, MI
6. Maasai Maynor, QB, North Brunswick, NJ
7. Kamron Love, S, Edmond, OK
8. Joseph Carter, WR, Plano, TX
9. Carter Sullivan, OLB, Antelope, CA
10. Joshua Pena, C, Gilbert, AZ

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	AAC	NATIONAL
Scoring	25.0 ppg	9	96
Rushing	276.5 ypg	2	5
Passing	72.8 ypg	12	130
Total	349.3 ypg	12	111
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**AAC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	33.5 ppg	8	103
Rushing	191.5 ypg	6	90
Passing	234.8 ypg	7	75
Total	426.4 ypg	5	87
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**AAC**	**NATIONAL**
+4	+0.31	5	41

STAT CORNER

33.5

Navy allowed 33.5 points per game in 2018, its most since 2007. A bend-don't-break defense only works if you don't break.

OFFENSE Malcolm Perry has been reinstated as starting quarterback, and coach Ken Niumatalolo will tailor the offense to suit his skill set. Perry opened last season as the starter and was the focal point of the offense, rushing 105 times through five games — 69 more than any other ball carrier. But things hit rock bottom against Air Force when Perry was bottled up and the offense was totally ineffective.

Perry switched back to slot back, the position he played as a sophomore, for the rest of the season while seniors Garret Lewis and Zach Abey started the final eight games at quarterback. In hindsight, Niumatalolo believes he made a mistake by not staying the course with Perry.

Navy's offense was largely ineffective last season regardless of who was playing quarterback. The Midshipmen ranked 96th nationally in scoring offense (25.0 ppg) and 111th in total offense (349.3 ypg). That yardage average marked the poorest production of the current triple-option era, which began in 2002.

The Midshipmen return a dynamic slot back in junior CJ Williams, who averaged almost 12 yards per touch in 2018. Williams needs to get the ball more after taking just 22 pitchouts and catching only nine passes in 2018.

Center Ford Higgins is the only returning starter along the offensive line, while sophomore Mychal Cooper projects as the top wide receiver despite catching only five passes a year ago.

DEFENSE Coordinator Brian Newberry — who developed one of the top-ranked defenses in the FCS during a four-year tenure at Kennesaw State — takes over for the retired Dale Pehrson. Newberry will install what he describes as a 4-2-5 scheme with 3-4 principles. He inherits a defense that graduated the top three tacklers in safety Sean Williams and inside linebackers Hudson Sullivan and Taylor Heflin. Pepe Tanuvasa, who almost certainly would have stepped into one of the linebacker spots, transferred.

Senior outside linebacker Nizaire Cromartie is the leading returning tackle after finishing fifth on the team with 58 in 2018. The rangy and athletic 6'2", 243-pounder plays the position known as Raider and will likely be asked to become more of a pass rusher in Newberry's system.

Sturdy nose guard Jackson Pittman, who has played in 39 of a possible 40 games during his career, is another building block. Elan Nash, who played outside linebacker in 2018, is the only other full-time returning starter. He is now playing the hybrid Slasher position.

SPECIALISTS Navy must replace record-setting placekicker Bennett Moehring. Senior J.R. Osborn is the only kicker to have appeared in a game, filling in for an injured Moehring and booting the game-winning field goal against SMU in 2017. Senior punter Owen White enters his senior season ranking fifth on the school's all-time list with a career average of 41.1 yards.

FINAL ANALYSIS Last year's schedule was the most difficult of the Niumatalolo era. It didn't help that Navy traveled 26,496 miles, the most of any FBS team other than Hawaii. This year's slate is a bit more reasonable, with UConn, East Carolina and South Florida rotating on and UCF, Cincinnati and Temple rotating off. If Perry can re-establish himself — and the staff devises a scheme to fit his strengths — a return to postseason play is possible.

Malcolm Perry

"They weren't as athletic as some other years with their backfield, but they have that specific system of developing guys; they can fix that."

— An opposing AAC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (3)					Returning Starters in Bold
WR	88	Mychal Cooper (So.)	86	OJ Davis (Sr.)
WR	87	Ryan Mitchell (Jr.)	34	Chance Warren (So.)
LT	76	Kendel Wright (Sr.)	64	Kurt Stengel (Jr.)
LG	68	David Forney (Sr.)	60	T.J. Salu (Sr.
C	**72**	**Ford Higgins (Sr.)**	65	Wes Mehl (Sr.)
RG	73	Peter Nestrowitz (Jr.)	77	Mike Adzima (Sr.)
RT	71	Billy Honaker (Jr.)	79	Justin Self (Jr.)
QB	**10**	**Malcolm Perry (Sr.)**	8	Dalen Morris (Jr.)
SB	20	CJ Williams (Jr.)	28	Keoni-Kordell Makekau (Jr.)
SB	25	Tazh Maloy (Sr.)	22	Travis Brannan (Sr.)
FB	**43**	**Nelson Smith (Jr.)**	37	James Harris II (So
DEFENSE (3)				
DE	96	Jackson Perkins (Jr.)	52	Denzel Polk (Sr.)
NG	**99**	**Jackson Pittman (Sr.)**	97	Dave Tolentino (Sr.)
DT	93	Marcus Edwards (Sr.)	95	Tobe Okafor (Jr.)
OLB	**56**	**Nizaire Cromartie (Sr.)**	33	Carter Bankston (Sr.)
ILB	54	Diego Fagot (So.)	51	Paul Carothers (Sr.)
ILB	41	Tyler Pistorio (Sr.)	47	Griffin Baumoel (Jr.)
OLB	1	Jacob Springer (Jr.)	35	Walter Little (Sr.)
CB	5	Michael McMorris (So.)	3	Cameron Kinley (Jr.)
CB	14	Micah Farrar (Jr.)	4	Caleb Clear (So.)
S	11	Evan Fochtman (Jr.)	15	Noruwa Obanor (Sr.)
S	18	Kevin Brennan (So.)	**8**	**Elan Nash (Sr.)**
SPECIAL TEAMS				
K	18	J.R. Osborn (Sr.)	KR 20	CJ Williams (Jr.)
P	4	Owen White (Sr.)	PR 1	Jacob Springer (Jr.)

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Malcolm Perry, 25-9-222-1, 2 TDs
Rushing: Malcolm Perry, 172 att., 1,087 yds., 7 TDs
Receiving: CJ Williams, 9 rec., 187 yds., 0 TDs
Tackles: Nizaire Cromartie, 58
Sacks: Nizaire Cromartie, 3.5
Interceptions: Jacob Springer, 2

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Ken Niumatalolo
Record at School: 87-58 (11+ years)
Career Record: 87-58 (11+ years)
Offensive Coordinator: Ivin Jasper
Defensive Coordinators: Brian Newberry, Brian Norwood
Annapolis, MD • Memorial Stadium (34,000)

Navy Athletics

SMU **Mustangs**

National Forecast: **88** • AAC West Prediction: **4** • Projected Record: **6-6, 4-4 AAC**

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	at Arkansas State
Sept.	7	North Texas
Sept.	14	Texas State
Sept.	21	at TCU
Sept.	28	at South Florida
Oct.	5	Tulsa
Oct.	19	Temple
Oct.	24	at Houston
Nov.	2	at Memphis
Nov.	9	East Carolina
Nov.	23	at Navy
Nov.	30	Tulane

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 5-7, 4-4 AAC

Sept.	1	at North Texas	L	23-46
Sept.	7	TCU	L	12-42
Sept.	15	at Michigan	L	20-45
Sept.	22	Navy (ot)	W	31-30
Sept.	29	Houston Baptist	W	63-27
Oct.	6	at UCF	L	20-48
Oct.	20	at Tulane	W	27-23
Oct.	27	Cincinnati (ot)	L	20-26
Nov.	3	Houston	W	45-31
Nov.	10	at Connecticut	W	62-50
Nov.	16	Memphis	L	18-28
Nov.	24	at Tulsa	L	24-27

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Danielson Ike, OT, Kansas City, MO
2. Keontae Burns, WR, Pittsburg, TX
3. Calvin Wiggins, WR, Trophy Club, TX
4. Terrance Gipson, QB, Houston, TX
5. Rashee Rice, WR, North Richland Hills, TX
6. Donald Clay, S, New Orleans, LA
7. TJ McDaniel, WR, Southlake, TX
8. Tai Brooks, OG, Allen, TX
9. Sam Westfall, CB, Saint George, UT*
10. Ulysses Bentley, RB, Houston, TX

*junior college transfer

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	AAC	NATIONAL
Scoring	30.4 ppg	6	54
Rushing	115.5 ypg	12	119
Passing	271.7 ypg	3	27
Total	387.2 ypg	9	81
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**AAC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	35.3 ppg	9	110
Rushing	196.4 ypg	7	98
Passing	232.9 ypg	6	69
Total	429.3 ypg	7	90
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**AAC**	**NATIONAL**
+7	+0.58	2	23

STAT CORNER

5.4

First downs were more difficult in 2018: SMU averaged 5.4 yards per play on such downs (99th), compared to 7.3 (10th) in 2017.

OFFENSE SMU's offense struggled in its transition to the Air Raid scheme in Sonny Dykes' first full season as coach. Inconsistency at quarterback, an injury-depleted line and a thin receiving corps led to a steep decline in production. The Mustangs dropped 66 spots to 81st nationally in total offense.

With three-year starting quarterback Ben Hicks having transferred to Arkansas, Shane Buechele, a grad transfer from Texas, is expected to be the starter. Buechele has the marquee name and proven experience to excite SMU fans. The one-time starter at UT completed 62.2 percent of his passes for 4,636 yards, 30 touchdowns and 16 interceptions for the Longhorns. Sophomore William Brown provides solid depth.

Returning wide receivers James Proche and Reggie Roberson Jr. should help the quarterback transition. The departure of Braeden West leaves the Mustangs looking for a primary running back. Ke'Mon Freeman and Xavier Jones, a 1,000-yard rusher in 2017, both averaged 4.5 yards per carry last season.

Strengthening the line was the primary focus of recruiting — four signees averaged 6'4", 310 pounds — and spring practice. Four sophomores and juniors with starting experience return. Transfers Charlie Flores and Cobe Bryant are poised to make impacts.

DEFENSE Defensive improvement helped keep SMU in the hunt for a division title and bowl eligibility last season. After getting outscored by a combined 133–55 in the first three games, the Mustangs turned things around, holding five of their final six opponents to 31 or fewer points. Even with the early problems, SMU went on to post its best season in terms of total defense (90th) since 2013 (73rd) despite having few seniors and lots of injuries.

Confidence will be high with five linemen, five linebackers and six defensive backs returning after playing key roles. Linebacker Richard Moore posted 13.5 tackles for a loss and five sacks, and end Delontae Scott had 10.5 tackles for a loss with 4.5 sacks. This unit has the luxury of depth.

Three of the top four cornerbacks return, but the graduation of Jordan Wyatt, a 41-game starter, leaves a big hole. Christian Davis and Robert Hayes Jr. rotated at the cornerback spot opposite Wyatt, and Kevin Johnson made four starts.

SPECIALISTS The special teams return intact with placekicker Kevin Robledo, punter Jamie Sackville and return men Proche, Roberson, Johnson and CJ Sanders. Proche was among the nation's best in kick return efficiency last year, but otherwise this group was lackluster, ranking 107th in kickoff coverage and 89th in net punting.

FINAL ANALYSIS It's tempting to think that Buechele will step into a new offensive system and immediately click as Garrett Gilbert did after transferring from Texas in 2012. And Buechele has proven skills, smarts and leadership potential similar to Gilbert. Bolstering the offensive line and improving the running game will be critical to hastening his development. The Mustangs finished one win short of bowl eligibility in Dykes' first season. With his system in place, a strong and deep defense, and talented coordinators running the offense (Rhett Lashlee) and defense (Kevin Kane), there's no reason to believe SMU can't claim its first bowl victory since Gilbert was QB.

James Proche

"They're very athletic on the edges, but they struggle with size and depth. Their lines show you the difference between them and a school like Houston."

— An opposing AAC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

Returning Starters in Bold

OFFENSE (7)				
WR	8	**Reggie Roberson Jr. (Jr.)**	2	Myron Galliard (Sr.)
WR	3	**James Proche (Sr.)**	1	CJ Sanders (Sr.)
WR	84	**Judah Bell (So.)**	4	Tyler Page (Jr.)
LT	78	Beau Morris (Jr.)	57	Cobe Bryant (Jr.)
LG	77	**Alan Ali (So.)**	79	Charlie Flores (Sr.)
C	75	**Hayden Howerton (Jr.)**	72	Nick Dennis (Sr.)
RG	72	Nick Dennis (Sr.)	56	Jordan Gipson (So.)
RT	70	Kadarius Smith (Jr.)	71	**Jaylon Thomas (So.)**
TE	14	**Ryan Becker (Sr.)**	88	Hunter Thedford (Sr.)
QB	7	Shane Buechele (Jr.)	9	William Brown (So.)
RB	5	Xavier Jones (Sr.)	2	Ke'Mon Freeman (Sr.)
DEFENSE (8)				
DE	97	**Turner Coxe (So.)**	38	Toby Ndukwe (So.)
DT	10	**Demerick Gary (Sr.)**	44	Harrison Loveless (So.)
NT	51	**Pono Davis (Sr.)**	94	Chris Biggurs (Sr.)
DE	35	**Delontae Scott (Sr.)**	22	Tyeson Neals (Sr.)
MLB	3	Delano Robinson (Jr.)	25	Myles Duke (Jr.)
WLB	14	**Richard Moore (Sr.)**	17	Jordon Williams (Sr.)
STAR	9	Shaine Hailey (Jr.)	40	Noah Spears (Jr.)
CB	12	Kevin Johnson (Sr.)	1	Eric Sutton (Sr.)
CB	7	Robert Hayes Jr. (Sr.)	28	Christian Davis (Sr.)
S	2	**Patrick Nelson (Sr.)**	16	**Trevor Denbow (Jr.)**
S	8	**Rodney Clemons (Sr.)**	20	Collin Rock (Jr.)
SPECIAL TEAMS				
K	89	Kevin Robledo (Sr.)	KR 3	James Proche (Sr.)
P	47	Jamie Sackville (Sr.)	PR 21	Reggie Roberson Jr. (Jr.)

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: William Brown, 85-53-625-1, 7 TDs
Rushing: Ke'Mon Freeman, 75 att., 339 yds., 6 TDs
Receiving: James Proche, 93 rec., 1,199 yds., 12 TDs
Tackles: Richard Moore, 92
Sacks: Richard Moore, 5.0
Interceptions: Kevin Johnson, Patrick Nelson, 2

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Sonny Dykes
Record at School: 5-8 (1+ year)
Career Record: 46-53 (8+ years)
Offensive Coordinator: Rhett Lashlee
Defensive Coordinator: Kevin Kane
Dallas, TX • Gerald J. Ford Stadium (32,000)

SMU Athletics

Tulane **Green Wave**

National Forecast: **80** • AAC West Prediction: **3** • Projected Record: **6-6, 4-4 AAC**

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	29	FIU
Sept.	7	at Auburn
Sept.	14	Missouri State
Sept.	19	Houston
Oct.	5	at Army
Oct.	12	Connecticut
Oct.	19	at Memphis
Oct.	26	at Navy
Nov.	2	Tulsa
Nov.	16	at Temple
Nov.	23	UCF
Nov.	30	at SMU

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 7-6, 5-3 AAC

Aug.	30	Wake Forest (ot)	L	17-23
Sept.	8	Nicholls	W	42-17
Sept.	15	at UAB	L	24-31
Sept.	22	at Ohio State	L	6-49
Sept.	28	Memphis	W	40-24
Oct.	6	at Cincinnati	L	21-37
Oct.	20	SMU	L	23-27
Oct.	27	at Tulsa	W	24-17
Nov.	3	at South Florida	W	41-15
Nov.	10	East Carolina	W	24-18
Nov.	15	at Houston	L	17-48
Nov.	24	Navy	W	29-28
Dec.	15	vs. Louisiana #	W	41-24

#Cure Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Tyler Judson, S, Zachary, LA
2. Jha'Quan Jackson, WR, Boutte, LA
3. Tyjae Spears, RB, Ponchatoula, LA
4. Levi Williams, DB, Valrico, FL
5. Ton'Quez Ball, S, Knoxville, TN
6. Sincere Haynesworth, C, Pearland, TX
7. Armoni Dixon, OLB, Chicago, IL
8. Keshon Williams, TE, Longview, TX
9. Eric Hicks, DT, Savannah, GA
10. Darius Hodges, ILB, Montgomery, AL

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	AAC	NATIONAL
Scoring	26.8 ppg	8	82
Rushing	218.2 ypg	5	23
Passing	182.9 ypg	9	104
Total	401.1 ypg	8	70
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**AAC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	27.5 ppg	4	73
Rushing	147.3 ypg	2	46
Passing	259.5 ypg	9	107
Total	406.8 ypg	3	75
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**AAC**	**NATIONAL**
-1	-0.08	8	73

STAT CORNER

24.0

The magic number was 24. When the Green Wave scored at least 24 points, they were 7-1. When they didn't, they were 0-5.

OFFENSE Even though Tulane earned its first bowl bid in five years, coach Willie Fritz fired his longtime offensive coordinator, Doug Ruse, after the 2018 regular-season finale. The Green Wave have ranked among the bottom five in the AAC in yards and points in each of Fritz's first three seasons. Tulane will have an up-tempo approach under new coordinator Will Hall, a former Division II head coach (West Alabama and West Georgia) with more than a decade of play-calling experience. Hall, hired in December, inherits plenty of proven talent at the skill positions and will benefit from key additions.

Graduate transfer quarterback Justin McMillan, a late-August arrival from LSU, won five of his six starts after taking over for mistake-prone Jonathan Banks and has one more season of eligibility. He completed only 51.3 percent of his passes but made clutch plays with his arm and, surprisingly, his feet after being advertised as more of a pocket passer.

Oklahoma State grad transfer Jalen McCleskey (167 career catches, 1,865 yards) provides an effective 1-2 receiving combo with Darnell Mooney (48 catches, 993 yards in 2018).

Every significant running back returns, including 1,000-yard rusher Darius Bradwell. Hall also wants to get the ball to Corey Dauphine, a speedy big-play specialist who had eight carries of 30 or more yards, and Amare Jones, who excelled as a runner and receiver in the spring.

The line lost three starters, but Brown grad transfer Christian Montano took over at center in the spring, allowing junior Corey Dublin to shift back to his more natural guard position.

DEFENSE Tulane's deep defensive line should be dominant despite having no seniors. The young group registered seven sacks in a 40–24 upset of Memphis.

Outside linebacker/rush end Patrick Johnson (10.5 sacks) earned second-team All-AAC honors, and fellow junior Cameron Sample might have joined him if not for a leg injury that cost him two games and hampered him in others. Nose tackle Jeffery Johnson was solid as a freshman but should be even better as he continues to improve his conditioning.

Inside linebackers Marvin Moody and Lawrence Graham will ease the loss of top tackler Zach Harris. The only question marks are in the secondary, where three-year starting safety Roderic Teamer and stalwart cornerback Donnie Lewis are gone. The Wave have high hopes for cornerback Thakarius Keyes, but versatile free safety P.J. Hall needs to be more reliable in coverage.

SPECIALISTS Ryan Wright is the full-time punter after a promising freshman year in which he handled everything but pooch kicks. Placekicker Merek Glover (10-of-13 on field goals) needs to improve his range (long of 40 yards). Jones averaged 27.9 yards on kickoff returns, the highest mark in school history.

FINAL ANALYSIS Coming off its first bowl victory in 16 seasons, Tulane believes it can take the next step and reach the league's championship game. The defensive front definitely is championship caliber; Tulane ranked second in the AAC in rush defense and came within seven sacks of the school record of 46. The key will be the development of the offense. If McMillan grooves to Hall's system, all the ingredients are in place for a serious run.

Darius Bradwell

"The offensive coordinator change is going to be interesting. Willie (Fritz) is trying to change the identity of a team that was successful at what they did."

— An opposing AAC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

Returning Starters in Bold

OFFENSE (5)				
WR	3	**Darnell Mooney (Sr.)**	17	Jorien Vallien (So.)
WR	82	Jaetavian Toles (Jr.)	87	Kevin LeDee (So.)
WR	1	Jalen McCleskey (Sr.)	15	Jacob Robertson (Jr.)
LT	50	Tyler Johnson (Sr.)	76	Michael Remondet (So.)
LG	64	**Corey Dublin (Jr.)**	66	Nik Hogan (So.)
C	58	Christian Montano (Sr.)	51	Stephen Lewerenz (So.)
RG		Ben Knutson (Jr.)	63	Cameron Jackel (So.)
RT	79	Joey Claybrook (So.)	**53**	**Keyshawn McLeod (Sr.)**
TE	46	Will Wallace (So.)	80	Tyrick James (So.)
QB	12	**Justin McMillan (Sr.)**	9	Keon Howard (Jr.)
RB	10	**Darius Bradwell (Sr.)**	6	Corey Dauphine (Sr.)
DEFENSE (8)				
DT	48	**De'Andre Williams (Jr.)**	30	Alfred Thomas (So.)
NT	77	**Jeffery Johnson (So.)**	93	Jamiran James (So.)
DE	55	**Cameron Sample (Jr.)**	78	Davon Wright (So.)
OLB	34	**Patrick Johnson (Jr.)**	54	Carlos Hatcher (So.)
ILB	35	**Lawrence Graham (Sr.)**	13	Quentin Brown (So.)
ILB	28	Marvin Moody (Jr.)	40	Nick Anderson (So.)
NB	33	Tirise Barge (Jr.)	**25**	**Will Harper (Sr.)**
CB	8	Willie Langham (So.)	21	Chris Joyce (So.)
CB	26	**Thakarius Keyes (Sr.)**	9	Jaylon Monroe (Jr.)
S	16	**P.J. Hall (Sr.)**	31	Larry Brooks (So.)
S	37	Macon Clark (So.)	36	Chase Kuerschen (Jr.)
SPECIAL TEAMS				
K	62	Merek Glover (Sr.)	KR 11	Amare Jones (So.)
P	97	Ryan Wright (So.)	PR 11	Amare Jones (So.)

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Justin McMillan, 154-79-1,304-4, 10 TDs
Rushing: Darius Bradwell, 201 att., 1,134 yds., 11 TDs
Receiving: Darnell Mooney, 48 rec., 993 yds., 8 TDs
Tackles: Marvin Moody, 71
Sacks: Patrick Johnson, 10.5
Interceptions: 6 players tied with 1

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Willie Fritz
Record at School: 16-21 (3 years)
Career Record: 170-90 (22 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Will Hall
Defensive Coordinator: Jack Curtis
New Orleans, LA • Yulman Stadium (30,000)

Tulane Athletics

Tulsa **Golden Hurricane**

National Forecast: **104** • AAC West Prediction: **6** • Projected Record: **4-8, 3-5 AAC**

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	30	at Michigan State
Sept.	7	at San Jose State
Sept.	14	Oklahoma State
Sept.	21	Wyoming
Oct.	5	at SMU
Oct.	12	Navy
Oct.	19	at Cincinnati
Oct.	26	Memphis
Nov.	2	at Tulane
Nov.	8	UCF
Nov.	23	Houston
Nov.	30	at East Carolina

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 3-9, 2-6 AAC

Sept.	1	Central Arkansas	W	38-27
Sept.	8	at Texas	L	21-28
Sept.	15	Arkansas State	L	20-29
Sept.	20	at Temple	L	17-31
Oct.	4	at Houston	L	26-41
Oct.	12	South Florida	L	24-25
Oct.	20	at Arkansas	L	0-23
Oct.	27	Tulane	L	17-24
Nov.	3	Connecticut	W	49-19
Nov.	10	at Memphis	L	21-47
Nov.	17	at Navy	L	29-37
Nov.	24	SMU	W	27-24

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Cooper Laake, DT, Austin, TX
2. Denzel Carter, TE, Saint Petersburg, FL*
3. Dorian Hopkins, LB, Memphis, TN
4. Korey King, WR, Missouri City, TX
5. Jaise Oliver, S, Fairfield, TX
6. Chester Baah, OG, Tulsa, OK
7. RaQuan Thompson, DE, Killeen, TX
8. Lamar Mullins, S, Atlanta, GA*
9. Tyler Smith, OG, Fort Worth, TX
10. Bershard Glaspie, LB, Mesquite, TX

*junior college transfer

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	AAC	NATIONAL
Scoring	24.1 ppg	10	103
Rushing	200.5 ypg	7	35
Passing	177.1 ypg	11	109
Total	377.6 ypg	11	91
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**AAC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	29.6 ppg	5	80
Rushing	233.1 ypg	10	119
Passing	174.6 ypg	1	8
Total	407.7 ypg	4	76
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**AAC**	**NATIONAL**
-4	-0.33	10	91

STAT CORNER

-1.7

Tulsa's defense allowed 1.7 fewer yards per play in 2018 (5.6) than in 2017 (7.3), the largest improvement in FBS.

OFFENSE After back-to-back seasons doomed by inconsistent quarterback play, Tulsa should be in a much better shape at the position given the timely addition of Zach Smith, who started 10 games at Baylor — highlighted by a 463-yard outing against Oklahoma in 2017 — and sat out last year as a transfer. Seth Boomer, who progressed nicely while completing 61 percent of his passes in the last five games of 2018, will be the backup as a sophomore.

Primary targets Keylon Stokes and Keenen Johnson posted a combined 1,000-plus yards, and they will be counted on to deliver more of an impact with the expected improvement at quarterback. Receiving roles will be up for grabs, but there are some promising, albeit unproven, options on the roster — most notably Josh Stewart and Sam Crawford Jr.

Although the run game has been a prominent aspect of the Golden Hurricane offense in recent years, inexperience on the offensive line could prompt more aggressive play calling from fifth-year head coach Philip Montgomery. Still, the backfield will spotlight homegrown duo Shamari Brooks and Corey Taylor II, who each averaged more than 4.0 yards per carry last season and together accounted for half of the team's touchdowns.

DEFENSE Upon moving to a 3-3-5 alignment that better suits its more athletic personnel, Tulsa completed a staggering turnaround, allowing 121.2 fewer yards per game in 2018 and ranking eighth nationally against the pass.

Seven starters return on defense and another eight players have valuable starting experience, so the Hurricane can realistically continue their progression on that side of the ball despite having a new coordinator. Joseph Gillespie, previously TU's linebackers coach (and a long-time high school coach in Texas) is replacing the retiring Bill Young.

Headlining the defense are linebackers Cooper Edmiston, a turnover machine who recorded 113 tackles last season, and Zaven Collins, a Freshman All-American and star in the making. Trevis Gipson, who has gained 50 pounds since arriving on campus, anchors a veteran front, and the secondary boasts savvy senior Manny Bunch at free safety along with a crop of young players bursting with potential.

SPECIALISTS Nine missed field goals were problematic for a team that struggled to score last year, but higher expectations for the offense should remove some of the pressure from the kicking game. Freshman Jacob Rainey could unseat incumbent John Parker Romo, who made only 2-of-5 attempts. Thomas Bennett, who averaged 46.6 yards per punt with a dozen landing inside the 20-yard line, returns.

FINAL ANALYSIS After a total of five wins in the last two seasons, there is considerable pressure on Montgomery to get things turned around. Montgomery desperately needs Smith to flourish as a passer and for the Hurricane to get back to their high-octane ways (they ranked fourth nationally in total offense as recently as 2016). Otherwise, it could be another long year — and another finish toward the bottom of the AAC West Division standings.

There is one thing for fans to get excited about: The home slate is perhaps the most attractive in school history, featuring dates with Oklahoma State, Memphis, UCF and Houston.

Shamari Brooks

"Honestly, no coach could really tell you why things haven't worked out lately. Is it culture? They should be better than they've been."

— An opposing AAC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

Returning Starters in Bold

OFFENSE (6)				
WR	1	Josh Stewart (Jr.)	88	Malik Jackson (So.)
WR	**8**	**Keenen Johnson (Sr.)**	9	Sam Crawford Jr. (So.)
WR	**2**	**Keylon Stokes (Jr.)**	85	Imiee Cooksey (Fr.)
LT	**65**	**Chris Ivy Jr. (Sr.)**		Zach Coleman (Fr.)
LG	**71**	**Chris Paul (So.)**	75	Dante Bivens (So.)
C	73	Dylan Couch (Jr.)	77	Josh Owens (Fr.)
RG	68	Tiller Bucktrot (Jr.)	66	Gerard Wheeler (So.)
RT	78	X'Zauvea Gadlin (Fr.)	63	Judge Hartin (Jr.)
TE	32	James Palmer (Fr.)		Denzel Carter (Jr.)
QB	11	Zach Smith (Jr.)	**12**	**Seth Boomer (So.)**
RB	**3**	**Shamari Brooks (Jr.)**	24	Corey Taylor II (Jr.)
DEFENSE (7)				
DE	54	Shemarr Robinson (Sr.)	44	Cade Baumann (Jr.)
NG	**97**	**Tyarise Stevenson (Jr.)**	90	Jaxon Player (So.)
DE	**15**	**Trevis Gipson (Sr.)**	91	Cullen Wick (Jr.)
OLB	**6**	**Diamon Cannon (Sr.)**	24	Treyvon Reeves (Jr.)
MLB	**42**	**Cooper Edmiston (Sr.)**	30	Justin Wright (Fr.)
OLB	**23**	**Zaven Collins (So.)**	19	Grant Sawyer (So.)
CB	9	Reggie Robinson II (Sr.)	27	Daiquain Jackson (So.)
CB	26	Akayleb Evans (Jr.)	12	Allie Green IV (Jr.)
NB	**21**	**Bryson Powers (So.)**	28	TieNeal Martin (Sr.)
FS	29	Brandon Johnson (Sr.)	39	Mike Garrett Jr. (Jr.)
SS	**10**	**Manny Bunch (Sr.)**	22	Marcus Mays (So.)
SPECIAL TEAMS				
K	94	Jacob Rainey (Fr.)	**KR** 2	Keylon Stokes (Jr.)
P	33	Thomas Bennett (Sr.)	**PR** 2	Keylon Stokes (Jr.)

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Seth Boomer, 198-101-1,378-4, 9 TDs
Rushing: Shamari Brooks, 229 att., 967 yds., 7 TDs
Receiving: Keylon Stokes, 41 rec., 575 yds., 2 TDs
Tackles: Cooper Edmiston, 113
Sacks: Trevis Gipson, 4.0
Interceptions: Cooper Edmiston, 4

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Philip Montgomery
Record at School: 21-29 (4 years)
Career Record: 21-29 (4 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Philip Montgomery
Defensive Coordinator: Joseph Gillespie
Tulsa, OK • H.A. Chapman Stadium (30,000)

Tulsa Athletics

Big 12 *Preview*

Predicted Order of Finish

1 *Oklahoma*
SOONERS
11-2, 7-2 Big 12

2 *Texas*
LONGHORNS
9-4, 7-2 Big 12

3 *Iowa State*
CYCLONES
8-4, 6-3 Big 12

4 *Oklahoma State*
COWBOYS
8-4, 5-4 Big 12

5 *Baylor*
BEARS
8-4, 5-4 Big 12

6 *TCU*
HORNED FROGS
8-4, 5-4 Big 12

7 *West Virginia*
MOUNTAINEERS
6-6, 4-5 Big 12

8 *Texas Tech*
RED RAIDERS
5-7, 3-6 Big 12

9 *Kansas State*
WILDCATS
5-7, 3-6 Big 12

10 *Kansas*
JAYHAWKS
2-10, 0-9 Big 12

Big 12 Championship: **Oklahoma over Texas**

Games to Watch

SEPT. 7
LSU AT TEXAS
It's the first regular-season matchup between these two storied programs since 1954. They last played in the Cotton Bowl on Jan. 1, 2003.

SEPT. 7
WEST VIRGINIA AT MISSOURI
New West Virginia coach Neal Brown takes his new-look Mountaineers into Columbia for an intriguing early-season test against Missouri.

SEPT. 14
IOWA AT IOWA STATE
Matt Campbell has raised the national profile of Iowa State football — but has yet to beat Iowa. The Cyclones have lost four straight and five of six to Iowa.

SEPT. 14
KANSAS STATE AT MISS. STATE
Kansas State was humbled at home by Mississippi State last fall and is 1–4 against SEC opponents in the last five seasons.

SEPT. 21
WEST VIRGINIA AT KANSAS
Les Miles went 16–16 in the Big 12 in his four seasons at Oklahoma State. Reaching the .500 mark will be far more difficult at Kansas.

SEPT. 28
IOWA STATE AT BAYLOR
It's the Big 12 opener for two upstart programs who head into the 2019 season with momentum. The winner could emerge as a dark-horse contender.

Ehlinger: Chris Covatta; Wallace: Jay Biggerstaff

2019 Unit Rankings

	QB	RB	WR/TE	OL	DL	LB	DB
BAYLOR	4	7	4	9	5	5	8
IOWA STATE	3	9	7	5	1	1	3
KANSAS	10	5	10	10	10	10	10
KANSAS STATE	8	10	9	7	4	8	5
OKLAHOMA	2	1	1	1	6	7	9
OKLAHOMA STATE	6	3	2	3	9	3	2
TCU	9	6	5	4	3	6	4
TEXAS	1	2	3	2	2	2	1
TEXAS TECH	5	8	6	6	7	4	6
WEST VIRGINIA	7	4	8	8	8	9	7

Tylan Wallace, Oklahoma State

2019 Bowl Projections

Sugar Bowl: Oklahoma vs. LSU
Alamo Bowl: Texas vs. Oregon
Camping World Bowl: Iowa State vs. Virginia
Texas Bowl: Oklahoma State vs. Mississippi State
Cheez-It Bowl: Baylor vs. USC
First Responder Bowl: TCU vs. North Texas
Liberty Bowl: West Virginia vs. Memphis

Recruiting by School

1. Texas
2. Oklahoma
3. TCU
4. Baylor
5. Oklahoma State
6. Iowa State
7. West Virginia
8. Kansas State
9. Kansas
10. Texas Tech

Sam Ehlinger, Texas

Big 12 Coordinator Carousel

Iowa State: Offense
New: Tom Manning
Old: Matt Campbell

Kansas: Offense
New: Les Koenning
Old: Doug Meacham

Kansas: Defense
New: D.J. Eliot
Old: Clint Bowen

Kansas State: Offense
New: Courtney Messingham
Old: Andre Coleman

Kansas State: Defense
New: Scott Hazelton
Old: Brian Norwood, Blake Seiler

Oklahoma: Defense
New: Alex Grinch
Old: Mike Stoops

Oklahoma State: Offense
New: Sean Gleeson
Old: Mike Yurcich

Texas: Defense
New: Craig Naivar, Todd Orlando
Old: Todd Orlando

Texas Tech: Offense
New: David Yost
Old: Kevin Johns, Clay McGuire

Texas Tech: Defense
New: Keith Patterson
Old: David Gibbs, Zac Spavital

West Virginia: Offense
New: Matt Moore, Chad Scott
Old: Jake Spavital

West Virginia: Defense
New: Vic Koenning
Old: Tony Gibson

OCT. 12
OKLAHOMA VS. TEXAS (DALLAS)
Each of the last five regular-season games between these two rivals has been decided by seven points or fewer. Expect more of the same in 2019.

NOV. 2
KANSAS STATE AT KANSAS
The last time both Sunflower State programs had new coaches in the same season: 1986, Stan Parrish at K-State and Bob Valesente at KU.

NOV. 9
IOWA STATE AT OKLAHOMA
The Cyclones shocked the college football world on their last trip to Norman. OU returned the favor last year in Ames. This one should be fun.

NOV. 16
TEXAS AT IOWA STATE
Iowa State has scored a total of 23 points in its last three games against Texas. Can sophomore QB Brock Purdy solve the Longhorn defense?

NOV. 29
TEXAS TECH AT TEXAS
Texas Tech has won two straight at Texas for the first time since the series began in 1934. Matt Wells would love to extend the streak to three.

NOV. 30
OKLAHOMA AT OKLAHOMA STATE
Bedlam has lived up to its name of late: The *losing* team has scored at least 47 points in each of the last two games.

Charlie Brewer, Baylor

Big 12 Returning Leaders

Passing	ATT	COMP	PCT	YDS	TD	INT	AVG/G
Sam Ehlinger, Texas	425	275	64.7	3,296	25	5	235.4
Charlie Brewer, Baylor	390	240	61.5	3,019	19	9	232.2
Brock Purdy, Iowa State	220	146	66.4	2,250	16	7	225.0

Rushing	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD	LONG	AVG/G
Pooka Williams Jr., Kansas	161	1,125	7.0	7	72	102.3
Kennedy Brooks, Oklahoma	119	1,056	8.9	12	86	88.0
Trey Sermon, Oklahoma	164	947	5.8	13	60	67.6

Receiving	REC	YDS	AVG	TD	LONG	AVG/G
Tylan Wallace, Oklahoma State	86	1,491	17.3	12	56	114.7
CeeDee Lamb, Oklahoma	65	1,158	17.8	11	86	82.7
Jalen Reagor, TCU	72	1,061	14.7	9	67	81.6

Tackles: Kenneth Murray, Oklahoma (155), Clay Johnston, Baylor (99)
Sacks: JaQuan Bailey, Iowa State (8.0), Reggie Walker, Kansas State (7.5)
Interceptions: Adrian Frye, Texas Tech (5)

2018 Big 12 Standings

	BIG 12	OVERALL		BIG 12	OVERALL
Oklahoma	8-1	12-2	Baylor	4-5	7-6
Texas	7-2	10-4	Texas Tech	3-6	5-7
West Virginia	6-3	8-4	Kansas State	3-6	5-7
Iowa State	6-3	8-5	Oklahoma State	3-6	7-6
TCU	4-5	7-6	Kansas	1-8	3-9

2018 Bowl Results

Liberty Bowl: Oklahoma State 38, Missouri 33

Cheez-It Bowl: TCU 10, California 7 (OT)

Texas Bowl: Baylor 45, Vanderbilt 38

Camping World Bowl: Syracuse 34, West Virginia 18

Alamo Bowl: Washington State 28, Iowa State 26

Sugar Bowl: Texas 28, Georgia 21

Orange Bowl (CFP Semifinal): Alabama 45, Oklahoma 34

2018 Big 12 Team Stats & Rankings

Offense

	SCORING	RUSH	PASS	TOTAL
Baylor	29.5 (6)	169.1 (4)	290.0 (5)	459.1 (5)
Iowa State	26.8 (7)	130.1 (10)	240.9 (7)	371.0 (7)
Kansas	23.8 (8)	158.6 (6)	192.3 (9)	350.8 (9)
Kansas State	22.5 (10)	182.6 (3)	162.1 (10)	344.7 (10)
Oklahoma	48.4 (1)	247.4 (1)	322.9 (3)	570.3 (1)
Oklahoma State	38.4 (3)	190.3 (2)	309.8 (4)	500.2 (3)
TCU	23.5 (9)	156.2 (7)	211.5 (8)	367.6 (8)
Texas	31.1 (5)	153.1 (8)	258.5 (6)	411.6 (6)
Texas Tech	37.3 (4)	132.6 (9)	352.6 (1)	485.2 (4)
West Virginia	40.3 (2)	160.9 (5)	351.3 (2)	512.3 (2)

Defense

	SCORING	RUSH	PASS	TOTAL
Baylor	31.7 (8)	183.5 (9)	242.1 (3)	425.5 (7)
Iowa State	22.9 (1)	115.0 (1)	234.2 (2)	349.2 (2)
Kansas	30.0 (6)	171.8 (8)	246.8 (5)	418.5 (6)
Kansas State	25.4 (3)	157.7 (5)	245.8 (4)	403.4 (4)
Oklahoma	33.3 (10)	159.8 (6)	294.0 (10)	453.8 (10)
Oklahoma State	32.5 (9)	185.4 (10)	267.1 (8)	452.5 (9)
TCU	23.1 (2)	138.6 (3)	199.6 (1)	338.2 (1)
Texas	25.9 (4)	131.4 (2)	261.4 (7)	392.8 (3)
Texas Tech	31.1 (7)	160.6 (7)	288.3 (9)	448.9 (8)
West Virginia	27.2 (5)	147.7 (4)	259.0 (6)	406.7 (5)

Brewer: Chris Covatta; Bailey, Brooks, Torneden: Tim Umphrey; Calcaterra, Hubbard: Jay Biggerstaff; Anderson: Tom Lynn

ALL-BIG 12 TEAM

First-Team Offense

QB	**Sam Ehlinger**	6-3	235	Jr.	Texas
RB	**Kennedy Brooks**	5-11	205	So.	Oklahoma
RB	**Pooka Williams Jr.**	5-10	170	So.	Kansas
WR	**CeeDee Lamb**	6-2	189	Jr.	Oklahoma
WR	**Jalen Reagor**	5-11	195	Jr.	TCU
WR	**Tylan Wallace**	6-0	185	Jr.	Oklahoma State
TE	**Grant Calcaterra**	6-4	221	Jr.	Oklahoma
C	**Zach Shackelford**	6-4	305	Sr.	Texas
OL	**Jack Anderson**	6-5	320	Jr.	Texas Tech
OL	**Samuel Cosmi**	6-6	295	So.	Texas
OL	**Colton McKivitz**	6-7	312	Sr.	West Virginia
OL	**Lucas Niang**	6-7	328	Sr.	TCU

Grant Calcaterra, Oklahoma

JaQuan Bailey, Iowa State

First-Team Defense

DL	**JaQuan Bailey**	6-2	251	Sr.	Iowa State
DL	**Ray Lima**	6-3	302	Sr.	Iowa State
DL	**James Lynch**	6-4	287	Jr.	Baylor
DL	**Reggie Walker**	6-2	250	Sr.	Kansas State
LB	**Clay Johnston**	6-1	232	Sr.	Baylor
LB	**Kenneth Murray**	6-2	238	Jr.	Oklahoma
LB	**Marcel Spears Jr.**	6-1	215	Sr.	Iowa State
CB	**Jeff Gladney**	6-0	183	Sr.	TCU
CB	**A.J. Green**	6-1	190	Sr.	Oklahoma State
S	**Greg Eisworth**	6-0	198	Jr.	Iowa State
S	**Caden Sterns**	6-1	210	So.	Texas

First-Team Specialists

K	**Cameron Dicker**	6-1	210	So.	Texas
P	**Kyle Thompson**	6-4	222	Jr.	Kansas
KR	**Kene Nwangwu**	6-1	206	Jr.	Iowa State
PR	**CeeDee Lamb**	6-2	189	Jr.	Oklahoma

SECOND-TEAM OFFENSE

QB	**Jalen Hurts**	6-2	219	Sr.	Oklahoma
RB	**Chuba Hubbard**	6-1	207	So.	Oklahoma State
RB	**Keaontay Ingram**	6-0	215	So.	Texas
AP	**Trey Sermon**	6-0	224	Jr.	Oklahoma
WR	**Collin Johnson**	6-6	220	Sr.	Texas
WR	**Denzel Mims**	6-3	210	Sr.	Baylor
WR	**T.J. Vasher**	6-6	190	Jr.	Texas Tech
C	**Creed Humphrey**	6-5	325	So.	Oklahoma
OL	**Hakeem Adeniji**	6-5	310	Sr.	Kansas
OL	**Teven Jenkins**	6-6	310	Jr.	Oklahoma State
OL	**Josh Knipfel**	6-5	309	Sr.	Iowa State
OL	**Josh Sills**	6-6	328	Jr.	West Virginia

Chuba Hubbard
Oklahoma State

Darius Anderson
TCU

Jordyn Brooks
Texas Tech

Bryce Torneden
Kansas

SECOND-TEAM DEFENSE

DL	**Corey Bethley**	6-2	290	Jr.	TCU
DL	**Trey Dishon**	6-2	308	Sr.	Kansas State
DL	**Ronnie Perkins**	6-3	253	So.	Oklahoma
DL	**Malcolm Roach**	6-3	290	Sr.	Texas
LB	**Jordyn Brooks**	6-1	240	Sr.	Texas Tech
LB	**Calvin Bundage**	6-2	215	Sr.	Oklahoma State
LB	**Mike Rose**	6-3	228	So.	Iowa State
CB	**Tre Brown**	5-10	182	Jr.	Oklahoma
CB	**Rodarius Williams**	6-0	187	Jr.	Oklahoma State
S	**Brandon Jones**	6-0	210	Sr.	Texas
S	**Kenny Robinson Jr.**	6-2	202	Jr.	West Virginia

SECOND-TEAM SPECIALISTS

K	**Evan Staley**	6-1	188	Jr.	West Virginia
P	**Ryan Bujcevski**	6-0	185	So.	Texas
KR	**Jalen Reagor**	5-11	195	Jr.	TCU
PR	**D'Shawn Jamison**	5-10	185	So.	Texas

THIRD-TEAM OFFENSE

QB	**Brock Purdy**	6-1	202	So.	Iowa State
RB	**Darius Anderson**	5-11	212	Sr.	TCU
RB	**Kennedy McKoy**	6-0	208	Sr.	West Virginia
AP	**Trestan Ebner**	5-11	211	Jr.	Baylor
WR	**Deshaunte Jones**	5-10	185	Sr.	Iowa State
WR	**T.J. Simmons**	6-2	201	Jr.	West Virginia
WR	**Dillon Stoner**	6-0	198	Jr.	Oklahoma State
C	**Adam Holtorf**	6-4	302	Sr.	Kansas State
OL	**Scott Frantz**	6-5	303	Sr.	Kansas State
OL	**Julian Good-Jones**	6-5	296	Sr.	Iowa State
OL	**Marcus Keyes**	6-3	309	Sr.	Oklahoma State
OL	**Terence Steele**	6-6	320	Sr.	Texas Tech

THIRD-TEAM DEFENSE

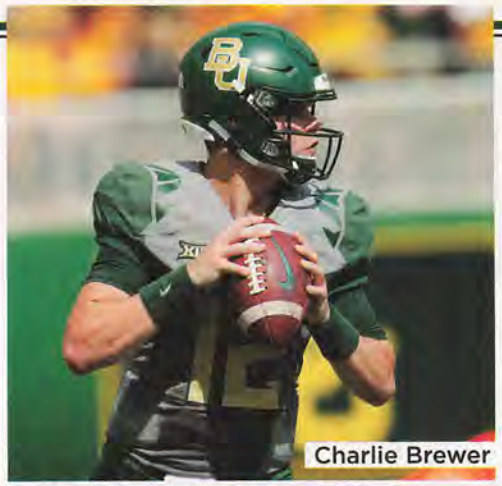
DL	**Neville Gallimore**	6-2	330	Sr.	Oklahoma
DL	**Wyatt Hubert**	6-3	255	So.	Kansas State
DL	**Bravvion Roy**	6-1	330	Sr.	Baylor
DL	**Broderick Washington Jr.**	6-3	305	Sr.	Texas Tech
LB	**Devin Harper**	6-1	235	Jr.	Oklahoma State
LB	**Riko Jeffers**	6-2	245	Jr.	Texas Tech
LB	**Jeffrey McCulloch**	6-3	245	Sr.	Texas
CB	**B.J. Foster**	6-2	210	So.	Texas
CB	**Adrian Frye**	6-1	190	So.	Texas Tech
S	**Innis Gaines**	6-2	203	Sr.	TCU
S	**Bryce Torneden**	5-10	190	Sr.	Kansas

THIRD-TEAM SPECIALISTS

K	**Blake Lynch**	5-5	148	Jr.	Kansas State
P	**Devin Anctil**	6-0	233	Sr.	Kansas State
KR	**Tre Brown**	5-10	182	Jr.	Oklahoma
PR	**Marcus Simms**	6-0	195	Sr.	West Virginia

Baylor **Bears**

National Forecast: **36** • Big 12 Prediction: **5** • Projected Record: **8-4, 5-4**



Charlie Brewer

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Matt Rhule
Record at School: 8-17 (2 years)
Career Record: 36-40 (6 years)
Offensive Coordinators: Jeff Nixon, Glenn Thomas
Defensive Coordinator: Phil Snow
Location: Waco, TX
Stadium: McLane Stadium (45,140)

KEY BEARS

CHARLIE BREWER, QB Passed for 3,019 yards and 19 touchdowns last season and added another 375 yards and seven TDs rushing.

SAM TECKLENBURG, OL Has started 25 consecutive games (23 at center) and will anchor an offensive line that lost two key veterans.

JAMES LYNCH, DE A first-team All-Big 12 pick who can play end or tackle; registered a team-high 5.5 sacks and 9.0 TFLs despite facing a lot of double-team blocks.

KEY LOSSES

JALEN HURD, WR Tennessee transfer hauled in 69 passes for 946 yards and four TDs and also gave the Bears a running threat in short-yardage situations.

BLAKE BLACKMAR, OL A three-year starter, Blackmar was part of three bowl wins in four years.

GREG ROBERTS, DE In 2018, had 34 tackles, eight tackles for a loss, three sacks and two pass break-ups.

RISING STAR

BLAKE BEDIER was a second-team junior college All-American at Snow College in Utah who figures to contribute immediately to an offensive line that lost a pair of veterans in Blake Blackmar and Pat Lawrence. Bedier could slide into Lawrence's spot at right tackle.

As good as last year's phenomenal turnaround was — from 1–11 to 7–6 — Baylor coach Matt Rhule's consistent message is that it's not good enough.

"We have to keep elevating our level of expectation," Rhule says. "I think going from one win to a bowl win has shown them, 'Hey, is the standard for last year going to be good enough?' No, it can't be good enough. We have to keep elevating the standard of what we expect."

The expectation this year is to do whatever it takes to make that next step.

OFFENSE Connor Galvin, who started the final six games at left tackle as a true freshman, takes it personally that Baylor quarterbacks were sacked a Big 12-high 39 times last season.

"I don't like when Charlie [Brewer] is on the ground," says the 6'7", 295-pound Galvin. "It makes me mad."

Brewer capped off a solid sophomore season with MVP honors at the Texas Bowl, throwing for 384 yards and two TDs and adding a career-high 109 yards and a TD on the ground in the Bears' 45–38 win over Vanderbilt.

But the Bears have to fix their protection issues if they expect to take another step in 2019. Former Baylor QB Shawn Bell went through a game of musical chairs in his second spring as the offensive line coach. Galvin stayed put, but two-year starting center Sam Tecklenburg shifted over to right guard and former Clemson transfer Jake Fruhmorgen settled in at center.

"Our goal is to find the best five," says Bell, who has Xavier Newman at left guard and either redshirt freshman Casey Phillips or junior college transfer Blake Bedier at right tackle. "We don't care who they are."

Particularly with Chris Platt getting a fifth-year waiver, the receiver position might be the deepest on the field. Denzel Mims needs to return to his sophomore form, when he had 1,087 yards, but Brewer has plenty of other options with Jared Atkinson, Tyquan Thornton, Marques Jones, R.J. Sneed, speedy Josh Fleeks and tight end Christoph Henle.

Mims was overshadowed last year by the emergence of Jalen Hurd, a Tennessee transfer who earned All-Big 12 honors, hauling in 69 passes for 946 yards and four TDs in his one season.

"We already know he's a good player, a really good player," receivers coach Frisman Jackson says of Mims. "He's got to do that other part. If he can get those guys to run through a brick wall for him, the sky's the limit."

Trestan Ebner, coming off a big-time performance in the Texas Bowl, could be ready to take over at running back. John Lovett has been the team's leading rusher his first two seasons, but he got a look at safety in the spring.

DEFENSE Much like sacks allowed is the offense's Achilles heel, forced turnovers are the bugaboo for Phil Snow's defense. With seven interceptions and three fumble recoveries, the Bears were last in the Big 12 in turnovers gained (10) and ranked ahead of only Oregon State (eight) among the 130 teams nationally.

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	Stephen F. Austin
Sept.	7	UTSA
Sept.	21	at Rice
Sept.	28	Iowa State
Oct.	5	at Kansas State
Oct.	12	Texas Tech
Oct.	19	at Oklahoma State
Oct.	31	West Virginia
Nov.	9	at TCU
Nov.	16	Oklahoma
Nov.	23	Texas
Nov.	30	at Kansas

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 7-6, 4-5 BIG 12

Sept.	1	Abilene Christian	W	55-27
Sept.	8	at UTSA	W	37-20
Sept.	15	Duke	L	27-40
Sept.	22	Kansas	W	26-7
Sept.	29	at Oklahoma	L	33-66
Oct.	6	Kansas State	W	37-34
Oct.	13	at Texas	L	17-23
Oct.	25	at West Virginia	L	14-58
Nov.	3	Oklahoma State	W	35-31
Nov.	10	at Iowa State	L	14-28
Nov.	17	TCU	L	9-16
Nov.	24	vs. Texas Tech #	W	35-24
Dec.	27	vs. Vanderbilt %	W	45-38

#Arlington %Texas Bowl

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	BIG 12	NATIONAL
Scoring	29.5 ppg	6	63
Rushing	169.1 ypg	4	65
Passing	290.0 ypg	5	19
Total	459.1 ypg	5	22
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**BIG 12**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	31.7 ppg	8	91
Rushing	183.5 ypg	9	84
Passing	242.1 ypg	3	83
Total	425.5 ypg	7	86
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**BIG 12**	**NATIONAL**
-9	-0.69	9	118

2019 RECRUITS

1. Peyton Powell, QB, Odessa, TX
2. Jacob Zeno, QB, San Antonio, TX
3. Jaylen Ellis, WR, Round Rock, TX
4. Qualan Jones, RB, Grand Prairie, TX
5. Matt Jones, DE, Odessa, TX
6. Tyrone Brown, DB, Beaumont, TX
7. Garmon Randolph, DE, Jefferson, GA
8. Niadre Zouzoua, DE, Brockton, MA*
9. Logan Compton, DE, Cypress, TX
10. Will Williams, LB, El Paso, TX
11. Hakeem Vance, S, Olive Branch, MS
12. Gabe Hall, DT, Waller, TX
13. Sam Snyder, TE, Orange Park, FL
14. Yusuf Terry, WR, Philadelphia, PA
15. Brandon White, DB, Amarillo, TX
16. Harrison White, DE, Spring, TX
17. Solomon Turner, S, Frisco, TX
18. Blake Bedier, OT, Lehi, UT*
19. TJ Franklin, DE, Temple, TX
20. Paul Matavao-Poialii, OG, Daly City, CA
21. Isaiah Howard, DE, Delanco, NJ
22. Jonah White, RB, Merkel, TX
23. Elijah Ellis, OT, Paris, TX
24. Davis DiVall, OG, Scottsdale, AZ
25. Noah Rauschenberg, K, Tulsa, OK

*junior college transfer

Recruits ranked according to the 247SportsComposite

Chris Covatta

ADVANCED STATS

5 Factors: College Football's Most Important Stats

Field Position[1]		Rank
Offense	26.8	120
Defense	30.0	81
Margin	**-3.2**	**107**
Efficiency[2]		**Rank**
Offense	45.9%	25
Defense	42.2%	75
Margin	**+3.7%**	**44**
Explosiveness[3]		**Rank**
Offense	6.0	44
Defense	6.5	119
Margin	**-0.5**	**94**
Finishing Drives[4]		**Rank**
Offense	4.3	91
Defense	4.7	82
Margin	**-0.4**	**92**
Adjusted TO Margin[5]		**Rank**
Projected	-8.7	126
Actual	-9	117
Margin	**-0.3**	**66**

KEY: 1-Average starting field position by yard line; **2**-Rate of successful plays (gaining 50% of necessary yards on 1st down, 70% on 2nd down, 100% on 3rd down); **3**-Explosiveness=yards per play; **4**-Points per trip inside 40-yard line; **5**-TO margin accounting for "luck" • Advanced stats provided by Bill Connelly of SB Nation

NUMBERS TO KNOW

6.4

In 2017, Baylor averaged just 5.2 yards per play on first down, 111th in FBS. The Bears improved dramatically last fall, all the way to 6.4 per play (34th). It probably isn't a coincidence, then, that their ranking on third down conversions also improved, to 29th.

-3.2

BU needed that efficiency because it was always playing uphill. The Bears suffered a field position disadvantage of 3.2 yards per drive, 107th in FBS and worst in the conference. Their average starting field position was 26.8, 120th overall.

170

If you like good rushing, Baylor games were for you. Despite a pass-first approach, the Bears rushed for at least 170 yards in six of 13 games — and also allowed at least 170 yards in eight.

"The big thing is it's got to become a mentality with the whole program," says Snow. "We still haven't gotten over the hump. I always say this: If you want a DB that intercepts the ball, recruit one that does it in high school. If they don't intercept the ball in high school, they're probably not going to do it in college."

Linebacker appears to be the strongest position, with all three starters returning and good depth behind them. Clay Johnston, a two-year starter in the middle who recorded 99 tackles last season, will be flanked by converted safety Blake Lynch on one side and either Terrel Bernard or Jordan Williams at the other. Lynch has played six positions, including receiver, running back and Wildcat quarterback, but "has come a long way as a defender," Snow says.

Depth may be an issue up front, but the Bears have some difference-makers in the line with James Lynch and former Texas A&M transfer James Lockhart at the ends and Rob Saulin and Bravvion Roy at tackle.

"Robbie came in and played as a true freshman," Rhule says of the 6'5", 290-pound Saulin. "He was a D-lineman who became an O-lineman who became a tight end. Not many guys do that. Now, he's 290 pounds, runs fast and is athletic. There's not many guys like him in the country."

The secondary was in flux through most of the spring with safeties Christian Morgan and JT Woods out with injuries, cornerback Harrison Hand transferring and corners Kalon Barnes, Mark Milton and Raleigh Texada doubling on the track. Barnes won the 100 meters at his first two collegiate track meets, clocking a 10.29 time at the Baylor Invitational.

SPECIALISTS Baylor got a sneak peek into the future at the Texas Bowl, when placekicker John Mayers and punter Issac Power were forced into action because of injuries. Mayers was 3-of-3 on extra points, while Power boomed a 47-yard punt from his own end zone on his only attempt.

FINAL ANALYSIS Making a similar jump and becoming a Big 12 title contender will be difficult, but the Bears should be good enough to top last year's seven-win total and make it to their ninth bowl game in 10 years.

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (8)

WR	**15**	**Denzel Mims (Sr.)**	16	Jared Atkinson (Jr.)
WR	**14**	**Chris Platt (Sr.)**	81	Tyquan Thornton (So.)
WR	21	Josh Fleeks (So.)	**84**	**Marques Jones (Sr.)**
LT	**76**	**Connor Galvin (So.)**	**57**	**Johncarlo Valentin (Sr.)**
LG	55	Xavier Newman (Jr.)	77	Jason Moore (So.)
C	63	Jake Fruhmorgen (Sr.)	58	Ty Smith (So.)
RG	**52**	**Sam Tecklenburg (Sr.)**	78	Henry Klinge III (So.)
RT	79	Casey Phillips (Fr.)	56	Blake Bedier (Jr.)
TE	87	Christoph Henle (So.)	85	Ben Sims (Fr.)
QB	**12**	**Charlie Brewer (Jr.)**	11	Gerry Bohanon (Fr.)
RB	25	Trestan Ebner (Jr.)	**6**	**JaMycal Hasty (Sr.)**

DEFENSE (6)

Returning Starters in Bold

DE	43	James Lockhart (Sr.)	97	Niadré Zouzoua (Jr.)
DT	91	Rob Saulin (So.)	90	TJ Franklin (Fr.)
DT	**99**	**Bravvion Roy (Sr.)**	98	Chidi Ogbonnaya (So.)
DE	**93**	**James Lynch (Jr.)**	54	Marje Smith (Fr.)
WLB	26	Terrel Bernard (So.)	**38**	**Jordan Williams (Sr.)**
MLB	**44**	**Clay Johnston (Sr.)**	50	Ashton Logan (So.)
SLB	**21**	**Blake Lynch (Sr.)**	41	Jake Copeland (Jr.)
CB	13	Raleigh Texada (Jr.)	27	Kalon Barnes (So.)
CB	11	Jameson Houston (Sr.)	4	Grayland Arnold (Jr.)
S	29	Christian Morgan (So.)	22	JT Woods (So.)
S	**3**	**Chris Miller (Sr.)**	8	Henry Black (Sr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	95	John Mayers (Fr.)	**KR**	13	R.J. Sneed (So.)
P	97	Issac Power (Fr.)	**PR**	21	Josh Fleeks (So.)

2018 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Charlie Brewer	**390**	**240**	**3,019**	**19**	**9**
Jalan McClendon	91	55	715	3	3

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD
John Lovett	**109**	**573**	**5.3**	**6**
JaMycal Hasty	**82**	**434**	**5.3**	**4**
Trestan Ebner	**69**	**413**	**6.0**	**1**
Charlie Brewer	**133**	**375**	**2.8**	**7**

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Jalen Hurd	69	946	13.7	4
Denzel Mims	**55**	**794**	**14.4**	**8**
Chris Platt	**36**	**511**	**14.2**	**1**
Trestan Ebner	**29**	**348**	**12.0**	**1**

KICKING: Connor Martin, 15-24 FGs, 85 pts.
TACKLES: Clay Johnston, 99; Chris Miller, 67
SACKS: James Lynch, 5.5
INTERCEPTIONS: Raleigh Texada, 2

Returning Players in **Bold**

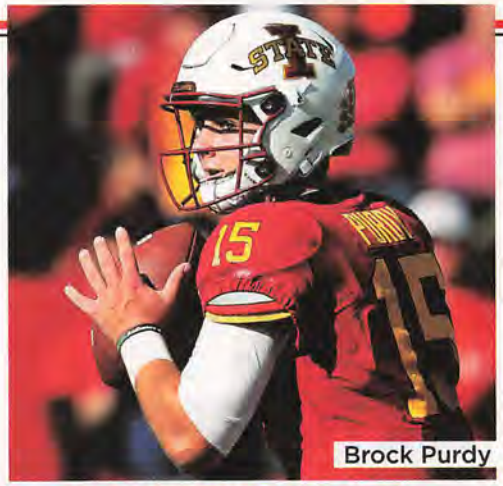
SCOUTING THE BEARS

OPPOSING COACHES SIZE UP BAYLOR

"No one thought they'd be as physical this early with what Matt Rhule and those guys started with. They've carved out a reputation down here for hitting you in the mouth. That was always Matt's M.O. at Temple, all the blue-collar stuff, but it translated really well to what he has run down here. I think they very smartly realized, 'Hey, we've got all these receivers and skill guys so we have to keep them happy and be able to recruit Texas, so we aren't gonna line up and smash it out of a pro set.' … The quarterback (Charlie Brewer) is a better player than anyone realizes. He's a freakin' winner. They put him out there way too early because they had to, and he sucked because he wasn't ready. Now he's really developed into a hell of a gamer. They're still recruiting great skill guys. When their receivers line up it looks like Oklahoma or Texas. Denzel Mims can break out this season. … Defense still isn't quite there; they're really gonna miss the defensive ends who left. I don't think they've adjusted to life in the Big 12 as much on defense. You can run out of pass looks and really hurt them. They haven't really been consistent creating pressure. Offensively they can score more points this season than they did. It hasn't really clicked yet, but you can see it coming. … They have to recruit better for defense."

Iowa State **Cyclones**

National Forecast: **24** • Big 12 Prediction: **3** • Projected Record: **8-4, 6-3 Big 12**



Brock Purdy

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Matt Campbell
Record at School: 19-19 (3 years)
Career Record: 54-34 (7+ years)
Offensive Coordinator: Tom Manning
Defensive Coordinator: Jon Heacock
Location: Ames, IA
Stadium: Jack Trice Stadium (61,500)

KEY CYCLONES

BROCK PURDY, QB As a true freshman, he tied or set school records in passing efficiency, completion percentage and 300-yard passing games.

JAQUAN BAILEY, DE The senior has 33 starts on his résumé and needs only one more sack to break Iowa State's school record.

MARCEL SPEARS JR., LB He's started 26 straight games and has been tabbed honorable mention All-Big 12 two seasons in a row.

KEY LOSSES

DAVID MONTGOMERY, RB Two-time All-Big 12 selection will go down as one of the best running backs in school history.

HAKEEM BUTLER, WR One of the top playmakers in college football, Butler was considered the toughest cover in the Big 12 by opposing defenses.

BRIAN PEAVY, CB The lockdown corner was a four-time All-Big 12 selection and two-time team captain.

RISING STAR

With David Montgomery off to the NFL, **BREECE HALL** will have a great opportunity to see significant reps as a rookie. He ran for more than 2,000 yards with 29 touchdowns as a senior in high school and arrived in Ames in time to participate in spring drills.

Prior to this winter's early departures of David Montgomery and Hakeem Butler, Iowa State hadn't had a player leave early for the NFL since Hall of Famer Troy Davis was drafted by the Saints in 1997.

So it's somewhat natural to believe that the Cyclones, who are entering Year 4 of the Matt Campbell Era, might take a step back after posting back-to-back 8–5 seasons and finishing third in the Big 12 in 2018.

That really isn't the feeling in Ames, though, which speaks volumes about how Campbell has not only recruited but also developed talent along the way.

In total, 11 Cyclones who received postseason All-Big 12 recognition are back. As Campbell's program matures, expectations continue to rise — and don't be surprised if this team remains in the Big 12 title chase deep into the season.

OFFENSE It all starts with quarterback Brock Purdy, who stepped in as a true freshman in 2018 and saved the season. After a 1–3 start, Iowa State switched to Purdy and went 7–2 the rest of the way. Purdy has the potential to be one of the best in the Big 12, but it is fair to question how much help he will have on offense.

The development of the offensive line is the biggest issue for the Cyclones this fall. The good news is that for the first time since 2014, all five offensive linemen return to the Cyclones in 2019.

"We are starting to see the health of our program exist because we have some guys with really good experience who showcased and took a big step forward on that offensive line a year ago," Campbell says. "We also have some young guys that are right on their heels and were there by the middle of the late part of last fall."

Replacing Montgomery, a two-time All-Big 12 running back, will be a chore. With only three fumbles in three seasons, Montgomery was always a reliable improviser during his career in Ames. Campbell and returning offensive coordinator Tom Manning will have plenty of options, though, as Kene Nwangwu, Sheldon Croney and Johnnie Lang are all guys who have played before. Freshmen Breece Hall and Jirehl Brock are talented backs who will push the veterans.

Filling the massive hole at receiver left by Butler could prove to be more difficult, mainly because his big-play ability was so elite. He averaged 22.0 yards per catch — the most by any player in the nation with more 35 catches — en route to a 1,318-yard, nine-TD season.

Two proven commodities, Tarique Milton and Deshaunte Jones, will see their roles increase at receiver, but look for the tight end position to continue to evolve at Iowa State. Charlie Kolar caught three touchdowns during his freshman season and could be the best pass-catching tight end in the Big 12 this year. He's not alone, either, as Chase Allen and Dylan Soehner are very capable as well. This talented group of tight ends could go a long way toward replacing some of Butler's lost production in the passing game.

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	Northern Iowa
Sept.	14	Iowa
Sept.	21	ULM
Sept.	28	at Baylor
Oct.	5	TCU
Oct.	12	at West Virginia
Oct.	19	at Texas Tech
Oct.	26	Oklahoma State
Nov.	9	at Oklahoma
Nov.	16	Texas
Nov.	23	Kansas
Nov.	30	at Kansas State

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 8-5, 6-3 BIG 12

Sept.	8	at Iowa	L	3-13
Sept.	15	Oklahoma	L	27-37
Sept.	22	Akron	W	26-13
Sept.	29	at TCU	L	14-17
Oct.	6	at Oklahoma State	W	48-42
Oct.	13	West Virginia	W	30-14
Oct.	27	Texas Tech	W	40-31
Nov.	3	at Kansas	W	27-3
Nov.	10	Baylor	W	28-14
Nov.	17	at Texas	L	10-24
Nov.	24	Kansas State	W	42-38
Dec.	1	Drake	W	27-24
Dec.	28	vs. Washington State #	L	26-28

#Alamo Bowl

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	BIG 12	NATIONAL
Scoring	26.8 ppg	7	82
Rushing	130.1 ypg	10	112
Passing	240.9 ypg	7	58
Total	371.0 ypg	7	96
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**BIG 12**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	22.9 ppg	1	37
Rushing	115.0 ypg	1	14
Passing	234.2 ypg	2	72
Total	349.2 ypg	2	33
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**BIG 12**	**NATIONAL**
-3	-0.23	6	85

2019 RECRUITS

1. Jirehl Brock, RB, Quincy, IL
2. Breece Hall, RB, Wichita, KS
3. Blake Peterson, DE, Beresford, SD
4. Isheem Young, S, Philadelphia, PA
5. Darien Porter, WR, Bettendorf, IA
6. Grant Treiber, OT, Sioux Falls, SD
7. Corey Suttle, DE, Jefferson City, MO
8. Easton Dean, QB, Oswego, KS
9. Jarrod Hufford, OT, Newark, OH
10. Skylar Loving-Black, TE, San Jose, CA
11. D.J. Miller, CB, O'Fallon, MO
12. Leonard Glass, ATH, Fresno, CA
13. Aric Horne, LB, Jacksonville, FL
14. Ezeriah Anderson, WR, Seffner, FL
15. Jake Remsburg, OT, West Des Moines, IA
16. Virdel Edwards, S, Plano, TX
17. Vonzell Kelley, S, Lee's Summit, MO
18. D'Shayne James, WR, Gilbert, AZ
19. Darrell Simmons, OG, Belleville, IL
20. Coal Flansburg, LB, Solon, IA
21. Kym-Mani King, CB, New Port Richey, FL

Recruits ranked according to the 247SportsComposite

Tim Umphrey

ADVANCED STATS

5 Factors: College Football's Most Important Stats

Field Position[1]		Rank
Offense	29.4	83
Defense	29.8	77
Margin	-0.4	82
Efficiency[2]		**Rank**
Offense	42.1%	69
Defense	40.7%	61
Margin	+1.4%	64
Explosiveness[3]		**Rank**
Offense	5.8	62
Defense	5.1	31
Margin	+0.7	32
Finishing Drives[4]		**Rank**
Offense	4.5	79
Defense	4.1	34
Margin	+0.4	45
Adjusted TO Margin[5]		**Rank**
Projected	5.3	26
Actual	-3	85
Margin	-8.3	124

KEY: 1-Average starting field position by yard line; **2**-Rate of successful plays (gaining 50% of necessary yards on 1st down, 70% on 2nd down, 100% on 3rd down); **3**-Explosiveness=yards per play; **4**-Points per trip inside 40-yard line; **5**-TO margin accounting for "luck" • Advanced stats provided by Bill Connelly of SB Nation

NUMBERS TO KNOW

-8.3

Based on national averages for fumble recovery rates and the ratio of interceptions to passes broken up, ISU's turnover margin should have been about plus-5.3 in 2018. Instead, it was minus-3. That minus-8.3 turnover difference was the unluckiest in the conference and 124th overall.

+2.2

The Cyclones owned first down. ISU's offense averaged 6.7 yards per play on first downs in 2018 (20th in FBS) and allowed just 4.5 (fifth). The resulting margin of plus-2.2 yards per play was fifth in the country and first in the Big 12.

8+

Only once in its history has Iowa State won at least eight games for three straight seasons (1976-78). Can 2017-19 become the second time the Cyclones pull it off?

DEFENSE Great defense is becoming a theme in Ames. Iowa State led the Big 12 in scoring defense (22.9 ppg) a season ago and ranked ninth nationally in yards per rush allowed (3.26).

The defensive line is this team's top position group heading into 2019. Two all-conference performers in senior end JaQuan Bailey and senior tackle Ray Lima are back. Bailey has 18.5 sacks in his career, which is tied for the most in school history. He also ranks fifth in tackles for a loss with 31.5.

Those two won't be alone. Jamahl Johnson is fresh off of a breakthrough junior season on the interior, while Enyi Uwazurike, Matt Leo and Zach Petersen have all shown promise on the outside. Iowa State lost Willie Harvey at linebacker but returns Marcel Spears Jr. and Mike Rose, who was one of the best freshman defensive players in the country last season.

The secondary does have some questions that need to be answered, specifically at cornerback. It's difficult to put a true value on lockdown cornerback Brian Peavy over the last four seasons. Replacing him and running mate D'Andre Payne will be difficult, but Iowa State likes sophomores Datrone Young and Anthony Johnson, both of whom played a lot as freshmen. Strong safety Greg Eisworth was the 2018 Big 12 Defensive Newcomer of the Year and should stand out again. Braxton Lewis, who started all 13 games last season at free safety, is back as well.

SPECIALISTS Iowa State returns all of its specialists from last season, including walk-on placekicker Connor Assalley, who made 16-of-23 field goals. Punter Corey Dunn, who struggled at times as a sophomore, will look to improve in his junior season.

FINAL ANALYSIS Replacing Montgomery and Butler will be no picnic, but Iowa State should be solid enough in important spots to avoid too much of a drop-off. Purdy puts the Cyclones in great shape at quarterback. The offensive line should take a step forward. Because of its strength up front, Iowa State's defense will again be in the upper third in the Big 12. At the very least, expect the Cyclones to go bowling for the third season in a row, although the program's goals are much more ambitious than that.

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (7)

WR	8	**Deshaunte Jones (Sr.)**		Darien Porter (Fr.)
WR	1	Tarique Milton (So.)	9	Joseph Scates (Fr.)
WR	82	Landen Akers (Jr.)	81	Sean Shaw Jr. (Fr.)
LT	51	**Julian Good-Jones (Sr.)**	76	Joey Ramos (Fr.)
LG	63	**Collin Olson (Sr.)**	52	Trevor Downing (Fr.)
C	57	**Colin Newell (So.)**	64	Derek Schweiger (So.)
RG	66	**Josh Knipfel (Sr.)**	77	Robert Hudson (So.)
RT	74	**Bryce Meeker (Sr.)**	75	Sean Foster (Jr.)
TE	88	Charlie Kolar (So.)	11	Chase Allen (Jr.)
QB	15	**Brock Purdy (So.)**	6	Re-al Mitchell (Fr.)
RB	3	Kene Nwangwu (Jr.)	28	Breece Hall (Fr.)

DEFENSE (7)

Returning Starters in Bold

DE	3	**JaQuan Bailey (Sr.)**	55	Zach Petersen (So.)
NG	76	**Ray Lima (Sr.)**	92	Jamahl Johnson (Sr.)
DE	50	**Enyi Uwazurike (Jr.)**	89	Matt Leo (Sr.)
LB	42	**Marcel Spears Jr. (Sr.)**	32	Gerry Vaughn (Fr.)
LB	23	**Mike Rose (So.)**	34	O'Rien Vance (So.)
LB	35	Jake Hummel (Jr.)	99	Will McDonald (Fr.)
STAR	33	Braxton Lewis (Sr.)	17	Richard Bowens III (So.)
CB	26	Anthony Johnson (So.)	10	Tayvonn Kyle (Fr.)
CB	25	Datrone Young (So.)	4	Arnold Azunna (Jr.)
FS	33	**Braxton Lewis (Sr.)**	11	Lawrence White (Jr.)
SS	12	**Greg Eisworth (Jr.)**	21	Jatairis Grant (Jr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	96	Connor Assalley (Jr.)	KR	3	Kene Nwangwu (Jr.)
P	13	Corey Dunn (Jr.)	PR	8	Deshaunte Jones (Sr.)

2018 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Brock Purdy	**220**	**146**	**2,250**	**16**	**7**
Zeb Noland	110	70	722	4	1

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD
David Montgomery	257	1,216	4.7	13
Brock Purdy	**100**	**308**	**3.1**	**5**
Kene Nwangwu	**39**	**157**	**4.0**	**0**
Johnnie Lang	**22**	**79**	**3.6**	**1**

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Hakeem Butler	60	1,318	22.0	9
Deshaunte Jones	**43**	**366**	**8.5**	**4**
Tarique Milton	**34**	**417**	**12.3**	**1**
Matthew Eaton	27	304	11.3	2

KICKING: **Connor Assalley, 16-23 FGs, 84 pts.**
TACKLES: **Greg Eisworth, 87;** Willie Harvey, 76
SACKS: **JaQuan Bailey, 8.0**
INTERCEPTIONS: **Braxton Lewis, 3**

Returning Players in **Bold**

SCOUTING THE CYCLONES

OPPOSING COACHES SIZE UP IOWA STATE

"An extremely well-coached team that has a clear identity on both sides of the ball. The issue here is how much talent they can put in the system and be able to compete with the top programs in the Big 12. … They like to show attitude on defense; they're really mean, blue-collar guys who play very downhill, very aggressive. They match up very well against the run. It's a little bit of a different scheme, a 3-3 with an overlapped safety. You have to really prepare for it because they can knock you out on the line. JaQuan Bailey would start for anybody in the league; he's a hell of an end. … Really what they have to figure out this year is the offense. It really hurts losing David Montgomery early to the NFL Draft. Montgomery and Hakeem Butler were the two best players on the entire roster, and they're both gone. And at Iowa State you don't get that 'Oklahoma next man' up luxury. You don't replace those guys, and they're responsible for a lot of those wins on the schedule last year. … The line needs to be better, and they need to develop some guys on the outside, but it's really a quarterback development story here. A lot of coaches in the league really like Brock Purdy. That kid has attitude and he fights. He's a maverick, Wild West-type personality and really fired them up. But now you have to clear up all the freshman mistakes."

Kansas **Jayhawks**

National Forecast: **108** • Big 12 Prediction: **10** • Projected Record: **2-10, 0-9 Big 12**

Pooka Williams Jr.

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Les Miles
Record at School: First Season
Career Record: 142–55 (15+ years)
Offensive Coordinator: Les Koenning
Defensive Coordinator: D.J. Eliot
Location: Lawrence, KS
Stadium: Memorial Stadium (50,071)

KEY JAYHAWKS

POOKA WILLIAMS JR., RB Dynamic playmaker became first Jayhawks freshman to earn All-Big 12 first-team honors and did so at both running back and kick returner.

BRYCE TORNEDEN, S Senior leader who posted the highest coverage grade of any Big 12 safety, according to *Pro Football Focus*.

HAKEEM ADENIJI, OL Started all 36 games in his previous three years and should provide stability for the Jayhawks at left tackle.

KEY LOSSES

DANIEL WISE, DL A two-time All-Big 12 first-team selection, Wise will be missed after recording five sacks and 12.5 tackles for a loss in 2018.

JOE DINEEN JR., LB Second-team All-American after leading nation with 9.0 solo tackles per game.

STEVEN SIMS JR., WR Finished four-year career ranking second in school history in receiving yards (2,582) and third in receptions (214).

RISING STAR

STEVEN PARKER is KU's top incoming recruit, as the four-star outside linebacker picked the Jayhawks over Texas Tech and Nebraska, continuing a relationship with KU receivers coach Emmett Jones. Parker should play right away at a position that lacks depth and experience.

New Kansas coach Les Miles ended his introductory press conference in November by saying, "I would like to finish a career with championships."

Luckily for the 65-year-old Miles, who signed a five-year contract with KU, there shouldn't be much pressure to get close to that level anytime soon. Miles is inheriting one of the biggest rebuilds in Power 5 football, coming to KU after previous coach David Beaty went just 6–42 in four seasons, 2–34 in the Big 12.

Miles faces the challenge of resurrecting the on-field product while rebuilding the foundation, with KU facing a scholarship deficit in the near term after junior college gambles by Charlie Weis and Beaty didn't pay off.

OFFENSE Miles has plenty of familiarity with expected starting quarterback Thomas MacVittie, as he previously recruited him when he was coach at LSU. The 6'5" MacVittie, though, stuck with his commitment to Pittsburgh at the time, then after a transfer to junior college, became one of Miles' first KU signings last December. Ranked the nation's top junior college pro-style quarterback by 247Sports, MacVittie will look to bring some life to a KU position that has had lackluster production ever since Todd Reesing left in 2009. MacVittie also will get a second chance to be an FBS quarterback, as he was relegated to special teams duties during his two years at Pitt. "That's what led me to juco. I've been a quarterback ever since I can remember," MacVittie says. "I want that leadership. I want the team on my shoulders, them looking at me when they need to."

One of the Jayhawks' biggest team strengths will be at running back. Pooka Williams Jr. is likely to return after being named Big 12 Offensive Freshman of the Year in 2018, though he was suspended indefinitely from the team in the offseason after being charged with domestic battery; the matter was cleared through the legal system in March when Williams signed a diversion agreement with the district attorney's office, though it's probable he'll still face some sort of team suspension at the start of the season. Senior Khalil Herbert has been productive when healthy each of the last two years, while junior Dom Williams and true freshman Amauri Pesek-Hickson — originally a Michigan commitment — should also expect to get carries in a crowded backfield.

At receiver, KU is mostly unproven but filled with potential. Alabama transfer Daylon Charlot didn't live up to high expectations with KU's previous staff — he had 12 catches in 2018 — but produced in spring practices and appears to be a breakout candidate. Miles also brought in a pair of junior college wideouts who could start right away in 6'4" Ezra Naylor II and 6'2" Andrew Parchment. "We needed tall, athletic wide receivers, and those are guys that we went after and got," Miles says.

Senior left tackle Hakeem Adeniji anchors an offensive line that has plenty of experience, as eight of the Jayhawks' top expected linemen are either juniors or seniors.

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	Indiana State
Sept.	7	Coastal Carolina
Sept.	13	at Boston College
Sept.	21	West Virginia
Sept.	28	at TCU
Oct.	5	Oklahoma
Oct.	19	at Texas
Oct.	26	Texas Tech
Nov.	2	Kansas State
Nov.	16	at Oklahoma State
Nov.	23	at Iowa State
Nov.	30	Baylor

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 3-9, 1-8 BIG 12

Sept.	1	Nicholls	(ot)	L	23-26
Sept.	8	at Central Michigan		W	31-7
Sept.	15	Rutgers		W	55-14
Sept.	22	at Baylor		L	7-26
Sept.	29	Oklahoma State		L	28-48
Oct.	6	at West Virginia		L	22-38
Oct.	20	at Texas Tech		L	16-48
Oct.	27	TCU		W	27-26
Nov.	3	Iowa State		L	3-27
Nov.	10	at Kansas State		L	17-21
Nov.	17	at Oklahoma		L	40-55
Nov.	23	Texas		L	17-24

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	BIG 12	NATIONAL
Scoring	23.8 ppg	8	106
Rushing	158.6 ypg	6	79
Passing	192.3 ypg	9	98
Total	350.8 ypg	9	110
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**BIG 12**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	30.0 ppg	6	82
Rushing	171.8 ypg	8	75
Passing	246.8 ypg	5	92
Total	418.5 ypg	6	81
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**BIG 12**	**NATIONAL**
+16	+1.33	1	2

2019 RECRUITS

1. Steven Parker, LB, Dallas, TX
2. Thomas MacVittie, QB, Cincinnati, OH*
3. Kenny Logan, CB, St. Augustine, FL
4. Malcolm Lee, DE, Omaha, NE*
5. Amauri Pesek-Hickson, RB, Leawood, KS
6. Velton Gardner, ATH, Dallas, TX
7. Jayden Russell, S, Lenexa, KS
8. Andrew Parchment, WR, Fort Lauderdale, FL*
9. Gavin Potter, LB, Broken Arrow, OK
10. Caleb Sampson, DT, Covington, LA*
11. Valerian Agbaw, CB, Powder Springs, GA
12. Torry Locklin, QB, Rockdale, KS
13. Jereme Robinson, LB, Montgomery, AL
14. DaJon Terry, DT, Meridian, MS
15. Marcus Harris, DE, Montgomery, AL
16. Mason Fairchild, TE, Andale, KS
17. Jordan Medley, QB, Kannapolis, NC
18. Ezra Naylor II, WR, Atlanta, GA*
19. Jacob Borcila, K, Westerville, OH

*junior college transfer

Recruits ranked according to the 247SportsComposite

Frank Jansky/AP

ADVANCED STATS

5 Factors: College Football's Most Important Stats

Field Position[1]		Rank
Offense	31.2	34
Defense	28.6	47
Margin	+2.6	36

Efficiency[2]		Rank
Offense	36.1%	120
Defense	45.4%	103
Margin	-9.3%	121

Explosiveness[3]		Rank
Offense	5.2	107
Defense	6.1	100
Margin	-0.9	108

Finishing Drives[4]		Rank
Offense	4.0	115
Defense	4.8	91
Margin	-0.8	119

Adjusted TO Margin[5]		Rank
Projected	-0.2	73
Actual	16	2
Margin	+16.2	1

KEY: **1**-Average starting field position by yard line; **2**-Rate of successful plays (gaining 50% of necessary yards on 1st down, 70% on 2nd down, 100% on 3rd down); **3**-Explosiveness=yards per play; **4**-Points per trip inside 40-yard line; **5**-TO margin accounting for "luck" • Advanced stats provided by Bill Connelly of SB Nation

NUMBERS TO KNOW

+16

Kansas was … lucky? Based on national averages for fumble recovery rates and the ratio of interceptions to passes broken up, the Jayhawks should have had a minus-0.2 turnover margin. Instead, it was plus-16, the biggest positive difference in the country. (It was plus-14 in their three wins.)

36.1

KU's success rate (percentage of plays that gained at least 50 percent of necessary yardage on first down, 70 percent on second, or 100 percent on third or fourth) was just 36.1 percent in 2018, 120th in FBS. But that was 3.1 percentage points better than in 2017.

2009

The Jayhawks haven't won even four games in a season since 2009. The bar is low for Les Miles; how long until he clears it?

DEFENSE KU's biggest question mark will be the defensive front seven, as the team lost five starters to graduation and will be transitioning to a base 3-4 defense under new coordinator D.J. Eliot. The Jayhawks also will be without two senior captains, as defensive lineman Daniel Wise and linebacker Joe Dineen Jr. are off to the NFL after earning All-Big 12 honors in 2018.

Newcomers will play a big role. Freshman defensive tackle DaJon Terry — "I would not want to block that lad," Miles said on Signing Day — should be a rotation player from Day 1 if he's in good shape, while linebackers Steven Parker and Gavin Potter also could be in line for immediate playing time.

Some of KU's best talent is in the secondary. Safety Mike Lee has earned the reputation of being a big hitter, while Lawrence product Bryce Torneden was one of the team's most consistent performers a season ago. Add in Corione Harris — he played 11 games as a true freshman after coming in as one of the program's top-ranked recruits ever — and reliable senior Hasan Defense, and KU should be optimistic about the back end of its defense against the pass-happy Big 12.

SPECIALISTS Williams was an All-Big 12 first-team kickoff returner in 2018, while Kyle Thompson also performed well in his first season as punter, taking second-team honors with a 43.3-yard average. KU will have to replace a proven placekicker in Gabriel Rui, with junior Liam Jones and true freshman Jacob Borcila battling for those duties.

FINAL ANALYSIS Miles' hiring brought some offseason excitement to KU football, which definitely needed a shot of enthusiasm considering the team's lack of success over the past decade; since 2010, the Jayhawks are 18–90 overall, posting four winless Big 12 seasons over that time.

One positive this year: The early-season schedule is favorable. KU hosts Indiana State and Coastal Carolina the first two weeks, so maybe there's a chance to build some momentum at the start.

With a tough Big 12 slate and plenty of inexperience on defense, though, 2019 seems more likely to end up as a bridge year than a breakthrough. In other words, unless Miles is a wizard, a turnaround in Lawrence is going to take some time.

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (5)

WR	2	Daylon Charlot (Sr.)	3	Evan Fairs (Jr.)
WR	11	Ezra Naylor II (Jr.)	8	Kwamie Lassiter II (Jr.)
WR	4	Andrew Parchment (Jr.)	5	**Stephon Robinson Jr. (Jr.)**
LT	**78**	**Hakeem Adeniji (Sr.)**	74	Clyde McCauley (Sr.)
LG	**61**	**Malik Clark (Jr.)**	70	Nick Williams (Fr.)
C	58	Api Mane (Jr.)	77	Andru Tovi (Sr.)
RG	76	Chris Hughes (Jr.)	77	Andru Tovi (Sr.)
RT	**67**	**Kevin Feder (Sr.)**	75	Antione Frazier (Sr.)
TE	87	Jack Luavasa (Jr.)	82	James Sosinski (Sr.)
QB	7	Thomas MacVittie (Jr.)	9	Carter Stanley (Sr.)
RB	**1**	**Pooka Williams Jr. (So.)**	10	Khalil Herbert (Sr.)

DEFENSE (5)

Returning Starters in Bold

DE	94	Codey Cole III (Sr.)		Malcolm Lee (So.)
DT	90	Jelani Brown (Sr.)		DaJon Terry (Fr.)
DE	97	Darrius Moragne (Sr.)		Caleb Sampson (So.)
OLB	5	Azur Kamara (Sr.)	9	Najee Stevens-McKenzie (Sr.)
ILB	37	Drew Harvey (Jr.)	18	Denzel Feaster (Sr.)
ILB	40	Dru Prox (Jr.)		Gavin Potter (Fr.)
OLB		Steven Parker (Fr.)	**15**	**Kyron Johnson (Jr.)**
CB	**2**	**Corione Harris (So.)**	3	Elmore Hempstead Jr. (Sr.)
CB	**13**	**Hasan Defense (Sr.)**	16	Kyle Mayberry (Jr.)
S	**1**	**Bryce Torneden (Sr.)**	7	Davon Ferguson (So.)
S	**11**	**Mike Lee (Sr.)**	24	Ricky Thomas (Jr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	46	Liam Jones (Jr.)	KR	1	Pooka Williams Jr. (So.)
P	80	Kyle Thompson (Jr.)	PR	8	Kwamie Lassiter II (Jr.)

2018 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Peyton Bender	321	183	1,894	13	3
Carter Stanley	**47**	**34**	**304**	**3**	**1**
Miles Kendrick	**19**	**11**	**100**	**1**	**0**

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD
Pooka Williams Jr.	**161**	**1,125**	**7.0**	**7**
Khalil Herbert	**113**	**499**	**4.4**	**5**
Dom Williams	**55**	**231**	**4.2**	**0**

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Steven Sims Jr.	53	535	10.1	4
Pooka Williams Jr.	**33**	**289**	**8.8**	**2**
Jeremiah Booker	31	344	11.1	5
Kerr Johnson Jr.	30	309	10.3	2

KICKING: Gabriel Rui, 12-17 FGs, 64 pts.

TACKLES: Joe Dineen Jr., 147; **Bryce Torneden, 91**

SACKS: Daniel Wise, 5.0

INTERCEPTIONS: **Hasan Defense, 3**; Shakial Taylor, 3

Returning Players in **Bold**

SCOUTING THE JAYHAWKS

OPPOSING COACHES SIZE UP KANSAS

"Where do you start? David Beaty had them looking better than they have in years, and he still got fired. I don't know what they expect Les Miles to do. It's about the scholarships, not the coaching. They're still screwed up from the Charlie Weis juco mess, and then Beaty tried to fix it doing the same thing because he knew he'd get fired. … They have the one running back out of New Orleans, Pooka Williams Jr. He stands out, but I'm not sure what else they can put around him, and that's if they let him play this season after his arrest. I think Chip Lindsey leaving for the Troy job was smart for everyone involved; it's a lot likelier that Les will let Les Koenning call his offense. Lindsey would've opened it up more than any Les Miles program in history. It will be interesting to see how Les responds to the pace of scoring in this league. … Defensively they've lost their best guys, Daniel Wise and the kid who led the league in tackles (Joe Dineen Jr.). They don't have any experience at defensive line or linebacker. Not sure what they'll try to do scheme-wise. … The question right now is not who you're gonna beat on the field, because that's not happening, it's where are you going to win in recruiting? You can't go juco. Les can't live in Louisiana on guys. … Right now this is the hardest job in the country, certainly in the Power 5."

Kansas State **Wildcats**

National Forecast: **64** • Big 12 Prediction: **9** • Projected Record: **5-7, 3-6 Big 12**

Skylar Thompson

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Chris Klieman
Record at School: First Season
Career Record: 72–13 (6 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Courtney Messingham
Defensive Coordinator: Scottie Hazelton
Location: Manhattan, KS
Stadium: Bill Snyder Family Stadium (50,000)

KEY WILDCATS

SKYLAR THOMPSON, QB He came on strong late last season and should fit into Chris Klieman's offense the same way Easton Stick did at North Dakota State.

JUSTIN HUGHES, LB The senior came out of nowhere last season and made 56 tackles over the final eight games.

SCOTT FRANTZ, OL He has been solid throughout his career and could easily contend for all-conference honors as a senior left tackle.

KEY LOSSES

ALEX BARNES, RB He led the Big 12 with 1,355 rushing yards as a junior. K-State will try to replace him with a committee of newcomers.

DALTON RISNER, OT A four-year starter and all-conference player at right tackle.

DUKE SHELLEY, DB He was K-State's top lockdown corner last season, making three interceptions and breaking up nine passes.

RISING STAR

Chris Klieman scored his first victory as K-State football coach when he landed **JAMES GILBERT** a week after being hired. The Wildcats badly need experience at running back, and Gilbert will provide it. The Ball State graduate transfer rushed for 2,806 yards with the Cardinals.

What does Kansas State football look like without Bill Snyder? We're about to find out.

A new era is under way in Manhattan, and Chris Klieman is leading the charge. After an ultra-successful run at North Dakota State that featured four FCS championships in five seasons, he is now trying to replace a legend with the Wildcats.

So far, his coaching personality feels like a hit with K-State players and fans. His "win the dang day" mantra has been embraced by everyone associated with the program, and spring practice was filled with newfound levels of energy.

"He provided a really good spark for our football team right off the bat," K-State quarterback Skylar Thompson says. "Our whole team is already on board."

Klieman is similar to Snyder in some ways. They both demand a great deal from their players, value defense and like to run the ball. But he is also different. He lets players listen to music at practice, uses social media and tries to promote a fun atmosphere. He likes to tell all the recruits he signs that he will both challenge them and love them.

Time will tell what kind of success Klieman will have at K-State. But he seems to be off to a good start.

OFFENSE New offensive coordinator Courtney Messingham will try to breathe some life into a K-State offense that ranked last in the Big 12 a year ago in both scoring offense (22.5 ppg) and total offense (344.7 ypg). That won't be the easiest of tasks considering that the Wildcats lost their top four running backs, including Alex Barnes, who led the conference in rushing as a junior. But K-State does return Thompson at quarterback, the bulk of its offensive line and a solid, if not spectacular, group of receivers.

Coaches have marveled at the growth of Thompson in K-State's new system and believe they have game-changers at receiver. With Isaiah Zuber, Dalton Schoen and Malik Knowles returning, K-State should have an improved passing attack.

But who is going to carry the ball? That's a huge question for an offense that figures to lean heavily on the run.

Messingham was Klieman's offensive coordinator at North Dakota State, where he mostly called running plays between the tackles and passed the ball just enough to keep defenses off balance. Ball State graduate transfer James Gilbert will likely start at running back after rushing for 2,806 yards with the Cardinals — including 1,332 with 12 touchdowns in 2016 — but Klieman likes to use multiple running backs. That means the Wildcats will also rely on true freshmen Thomas Grayson, Clyde Price and Joe Ervin.

DEFENSE Klieman is a defensive coach, and his fingerprints will be all over this side of the ball this season. Fans can expect the Wildcats to play more aggressively under their new head coach and defensive coordinator Scottie Hazelton. That means that corners will play close

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	Nicholls
Sept.	7	Bowling Green
Sept.	14	at Mississippi State
Sept.	28	at Oklahoma State
Oct.	5	Baylor
Oct.	19	TCU
Oct.	26	Oklahoma
Nov.	2	at Kansas
Nov.	9	at Texas
Nov.	16	West Virginia
Nov.	23	at Texas Tech
Nov.	30	Iowa State

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 5-7, 3-6 BIG 12

Sept.	1	South Dakota	W	27-24
Sept.	8	Mississippi State	L	10-31
Sept.	15	UTSA	W	41-17
Sept.	22	at West Virginia	L	6-35
Sept.	29	Texas	L	14-19
Oct.	6	at Baylor	L	34-37
Oct.	13	Oklahoma State	W	31-12
Oct.	27	at Oklahoma	L	14-51
Nov.	3	at TCU	L	13-14
Nov.	10	Kansas	W	21-17
Nov.	17	Texas Tech	W	21-6
Nov.	24	at Iowa State	L	38-42

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	BIG 12	NATIONAL
Scoring	22.5 ppg	10	111
Rushing	182.6 ypg	3	52
Passing	162.1 ypg	10	116
Total	344.7 ypg	10	114
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**BIG 12**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	25.4 ppg	3	48
Rushing	157.7 ypg	5	55
Passing	245.8 ypg	4	91
Total	403.4 ypg	4	71
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**BIG 12**	**NATIONAL**
+2	+0.17	4	52

2019 RECRUITS

1. Chris Herron, QB, Houston, TX
2. Keenan Garber, WR, Lawrence, KS
3. Matthew Pola-Mao, DT, Chandler, AZ
4. Will Jones, CB, Mansfield, TX
5. Tyrone Lewis, S, Hammond, LA
6. Konner Fox, TE, San Antonio, TX
7. Thomas Grayson, RB, Tulsa, OK
8. Logan Wilson, CB, Dallas, TX
9. Khalid Duke, LB, Atlanta, GA
10. Joshua Youngblood, WR, Tampa, FL
11. Cooper Beebe, DT, Kansas City, KS
12. Taylor Poitier, OG, Shawnee Mission, KS
13. Trevor Stange, OG, Coppell, TX
14. Jaren Lewis, QB, Columbia, MO
15. Kenyon Reed, DB, Long Beach, CA
16. Kenny Givens, DE, Chicago, IL
17. Jax Dineen, FB, Lawrence, KS
18. Clyde Price, RB, Kansas City, MO
19. Jonathan Alexander, S, Fort Worth, TX*
20. Joe Ervin, RB, Rock Hill, SC
21. Ty Zentner, K, Topeka, KS*

*junior college transfer

Recruits ranked according to the 247SportsComposite

Jay Biggerstaff

ADVANCED STATS

5 Factors: College Football's Most Important Stats

Field Position[1]		Rank
Offense	29.7	71
Defense	28.7	50
Margin	+1.0	57

Efficiency[2]		Rank
Offense	39.7%	96
Defense	47.2%	117
Margin	-7.5%	112

Explosiveness[3]		Rank
Offense	5.2	105
Defense	6.0	90
Margin	-0.8	103

Finishing Drives[4]		Rank
Offense	4.3	95
Defense	3.9	19
Margin	+0.4	44

Adjusted TO Margin[5]		Rank
Projected	4.9	32
Actual	2	52
Margin	-2.9	94

KEY: 1-Average starting field position by yard line; **2**-Rate of successful plays (gaining 50% of necessary yards on 1st down, 70% on 2nd down, 100% on 3rd down); **3**-Explosiveness=yards per play; **4**-Points per trip inside 40-yard line; **5**-TO margin accounting for "luck" • Advanced stats provided by Bill Connelly of SB Nation

NUMBERS TO KNOW

+1.0/3.9

The Wildcats still did the little things pretty well in Bill Snyder's last season. KSU was third in the conference in field position margin (plus-1.0 yards per drive) and allowed a league-low 3.9 points per scoring opportunity (first downs inside the opponent's 40).

-0.8

The big things were an issue, however. KSU averaged just 5.2 yards per play (105th in FBS) and allowed 6.0 (90th) — that margin of minus-0.8 yards per play was 103rd overall and second worst in the Big 12.

1.3

KSU was also almost guaranteed to lose the big-play battle. The offense averaged just 1.3 gains per game of 30-plus yards, 123rd in FBS. The defense allowed only 1.8 (43rd), but that was still a net loss.

to the line of scrimmage, and linebackers might blitz more often.

The Wildcats do have some nice returning talent on defense. Trey Dishon and Reggie Walker will lead the way up front. Both are three-year starters on the defensive line and seem poised for strong final seasons.

Linebacker is more or a question mark. The Wildcats have two proven players returning in DaQuan Patton and Elijah Sullivan, but they lost Justin Hughes to a torn ACL in spring practice. Hughes came on strong late last season and seemed to be emerging as the team's top linebacker. His absence will hurt K-State in terms of talent and depth.

There could be some questions in the secondary, though. Denzel Goolsby and AJ Parker will try and lead a group that must replace Kendall Adams, Duke Shelley and Eli Walker. Walter Neil Jr. should give the unit a boost at nickel back.

K-State was good against the run last season, allowing 157.7 yards per game, but struggled at times against the pass, surrendering 245.8 per game.

SPECIALISTS The Wildcats will take a different approach on special teams this season. Instead of dedicating one coordinator to that phase of the game, they will call on every assistant coach on staff to help the unit in some small way.

Blake Lynch is back at placekicker after making 14-of-16 field goals as a sophomore. Devin Anctil returns at punter after booming some nice kicks last season. Zuber handled most kickoff returns, but the Wildcats may go in a new direction this season with several skill players capable of stepping into that role.

FINAL ANALYSIS Nobody has meant more to K-State football than Snyder, but he didn't leave Klieman with a roster that appears ready to contend for a Big 12 championship. It won't be easy for the Wildcats to replace departing players such as Risner, Barnes and Shelley. Perhaps they have enough returning talent to top their 5–7 record from a year ago and become bowl eligible, but Klieman has already pointed out several freshmen who will be relied on to play immediately. Major holes at running back and in the secondary will make it hard for Klieman to win big right away.

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (7)

WR	7	**Isaiah Zuber (Sr.)**	88	Phillip Brooks (Fr.)
WR	4	Malik Knowles (Fr.)	13	Chabastin Taylor (So.)
WR	83	**Dalton Schoen (Sr.)**	21	Wykeen Gill (Jr.)
LT	74	**Scott Frantz (Sr.)**	66	Aidan Mills (Fr.)
LG	62	**Tyler Mitchell (Sr.)**	65	Harrison Creed (So.)
C	79	**Adam Holtorf (Sr.)**	72	Evan Curl (Sr.)
RG	76	Josh Rivas (So.)	63	Ben Adler (So.)
RT	77	Nick Kaltmayer (Sr.)	58	Justin Eichman (Jr.)
TE	87	Nick Lenners (Jr.)	**89**	**Blaise Gammon (Sr.)**
QB	10	**Skylar Thompson (Jr.)**	3	John Holcombe (Fr.)
RB	34	James Gilbert (Sr.)	2	Harry Trotter (Jr.)

DEFENSE (8)

Returning Starters in Bold

DE	56	**Wyatt Hubert (So.)**	90	Bronson Massie (Jr.)
DT	99	**Trey Dishon (Sr.)**	59	Drew Wiley (Jr.)
DT	91	**Jordan Mittie (Sr.)**	96	Joe Davies (Sr.)
DE	51	**Reggie Walker (Sr.)**	44	Kyle Ball (Sr.)
LB	5	**Da'Quan Patton (Sr.)**	22	Daniel Green (Fr.)
LB	3	Elijah Sullivan (Jr.)	55	Cody Fletcher (Jr.)
NB	15	**Walter Neil Jr. (Jr.)**	8	Daron Bowles (Sr.)
CB	12	**AJ Parker (Jr.)**	7	Kevion McGee (Sr.)
CB	2	Lance Robinson (Fr.)	6	Johnathan Durham (Sr.)
S	20	**Denzel Goolsby (Sr.)**	24	Brock Monty (Jr.)
S	31	Jahron McPherson (Jr.)	4	Wayne Jones (Fr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	10	Blake Lynch (Jr.)	**KR**	7	Isaiah Zuber (Sr.)
P	21	Devin Anctil (Sr.)	**PR**	88	Phillip Brooks (Fr.)

2018 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Skylar Thompson	**208**	**122**	**1,391**	**9**	**4**
Alex Delton	80	44	554	2	2

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD
Alex Barnes	256	1,355	5.3	12
Skylar Thompson	**105**	**373**	**3.6**	**5**
Alex Delton	85	234	2.8	2
Dalvin Warmack	36	144	4.0	0

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Isaiah Zuber	**52**	**619**	**11.9**	**5**
Dalton Schoen	**32**	**520**	**16.3**	**2**
Alex Barnes	20	194	9.7	0
Zach Reuter	18	239	13.3	0

KICKING: **Blake Lynch, 14-16 FGs, 61 pts.**

TACKLES: **Da'Quan Patton, 70;** Eli Walker, 68

SACKS: **Reggie Walker, 7.5**

INTERCEPTIONS: Duke Shelley, 3

Returning Players in **Bold**

SCOUTING THE WILDCATS

OPPOSING COACHES SIZE UP KANSAS STATE

"One of the biggest unknowns heading into the season. We don't know much about what they want to do. Bill Snyder was always so consistent in his philosophy: He wanted to shorten the game down and limit your possessions, run as much as they could and set the tone physically and then play really hard and aggressively on defense, but in a base package. Nothing fancy. That's the K-State we've all coached against. I think the new staff has to adapt and utilize what's there. … The quarterback (Skylar Thompson) could really be good; he just hasn't a lot of time. He could fit well into what they did at NDSU, running the quarterback. The difference there is that you're getting five-star linemen and linebackers beating on your guy every time you run an option. … They need to replace Alex Barnes at running back, but they also probably need to spread out their carries a bit more than what happened last year. They have a great offensive line. They always have really, really strong line play. … Defensively they return their front, but they weren't really impressive last year. They need to rework their secondary a little bit. That's the side of the ball they won't change too much on; part of the Snyder magic was finding reliable starters and depth out of odds and ends, and the scheme really helped that happen."

Oklahoma **Sooners**

National Forecast: **6** • Big 12 Prediction: **1** • Projected Record: **11-2, 7-2 Big 12**

CeeDee Lamb

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Lincoln Riley
Record at School: 24-4 (2 years)
Career Record: 24-4 (2 years)
Offensive Coordinators: Bill Bedenbaugh, Cale Gundy
Defensive Coordinator: Alex Grinch
Location: Norman, OK
Stadium: Oklahoma Memorial Stadium (86,112)

KEY SOONERS

CEEDEE LAMB, WR A second-team All-Big 12 pick a year ago, Lamb often played off of star Marquise Brown. But Brown is gone, putting Lamb in the spotlight.

CREED HUMPHREY, C The lone returning regular along the offensive line, Humphrey started 12 games as a freshman in 2018.

KENNETH MURRAY, LB Murray commands respect after totaling a whopping 155 tackles, OU's most since 2007.

KEY LOSSES

KYLER MURRAY, QB In his only season as an Oklahoma starter, Murray emerged as a playmaker deluxe, winning the Heisman.

MARQUISE BROWN, WR The speedy vertical threat was a game breaker, averaging 17.6 yards on 75 receptions and contributing 10 TDs.

CODY FORD, OL Ford headlined a talented front that set the stage for a unit that led the nation in total offense and scoring offense.

RISING STAR

CHARLESTON RAMBO managed just five receptions in 11 regular-season games as a redshirt freshman. But in the College Football Playoff Semifinal against Alabama, he broke out with three grabs for 74 yards, including a 49-yard touchdown.

Might Lincoln Riley have found a winning formula at Oklahoma? Transfer quarterback collects Heisman Trophy on the way to the College Football Playoff. Rinse, repeat. And repeat again?

It worked with Baker Mayfield and Kyler Murray the past two seasons. Now Jalen Hurts, no stranger to the CFP during his time at Alabama, arrives as a grad transfer, just in time to fill the Sooners' biggest need and restore Oklahoma as a serious contender for the national championship. Not that the Sooners don't have other questions — they do — but they typically produce satisfying answers to the transitions they face beyond quarterback. Now they've got their quarterback, too. And a spot among college football's favorites for 2019.

OFFENSE Hurts hasn't been around long, arriving on campus in January. Still, as arguably college football's most high-profile grad transfer ever, he already fits right in, wasting no time basking in his new environment.

During the spring game, after scampering for a short touchdown run, Hurts paused to gather teammates for an impromptu photo in the end zone.

"It was a fun atmosphere," Hurts says. "I figured, why not? I know my old coach, Coach [Nick] Saban, I probably would have got a chewing for that one."

At Oklahoma, fun is fine, as long as you deliver.

Hurts went 26–2 as the starter at Bama in a far more balanced and traditional offense. And he was famously benched for Tua Tagovailoa after halftime of the 2017 title game and played sparingly a year ago.

But this is a chance at a restart. "Any opportunity I get just to step on the field, I say it's a good deal," says Hurts, who completed 11-of-14 throws for 174 yards and a score in the spring game. The Sooners hope it's a big deal, too.

Hurts will have playmakers aplenty to help. Running backs Trey Sermon and Kennedy Brooks, who combined for 2,003 yards and 25 touchdowns last season, give Oklahoma a potent duo. Sermon led the team with 13 touchdowns, while Brooks, a Freshman All-American, ran for a team-high 1,056 yards.

CeeDee Lamb provides a go-to receiver, coming off a second-team All-Big 12 season that saw him haul in 65 passes for 1,158 yards and 11 touchdowns. Tight end Grant Calcaterra, a first-team All-Big 12 selection, is a big target with reliable hands.

There's a need for more wideouts to make an impact, but there's no shortage of candidates.

Oklahoma's major question mark resides along the offensive line, where four starters are gone from a dominant unit that claimed the Joe Moore Award, recognizing college football's most outstanding line. The lone returning starter up front, center Creed Humphrey, missed the spring with an injury, stunting progress for the unit.

DEFENSE Headline writers are already having fun playing off the name of new defensive coordinator Alex Grinch, who left as co-coordinator at Ohio State for the massive challenge of fixing Oklahoma's maligned outfit.

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	Houston
Sept.	7	South Dakota
Sept.	14	at UCLA
Sept.	28	Texas Tech
Oct.	5	at Kansas
Oct.	12	vs. Texas #
Oct.	19	West Virginia
Oct.	26	at Kansas State
Nov.	9	Iowa State
Nov.	16	at Baylor
Nov.	23	TCU
Nov.	30	at Oklahoma State

#Dallas

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 12-2, 8-1 BIG 12

Sept.	1	Florida Atlantic	W	63-14
Sept.	8	UCLA	W	49-21
Sept.	15	at Iowa State	W	37-27
Sept.	22	Army	(ot) W	28-21
Sept.	29	Baylor	W	66-33
Oct.	6	vs. Texas #	L	45-48
Oct.	20	at TCU	W	52-27
Oct.	27	Kansas State	W	51-14
Nov.	3	at Texas Tech	W	51-46
Nov.	10	Oklahoma State	W	48-47
Nov.	17	Kansas	W	55-40
Nov.	23	at West Virginia	W	59-56
Dec.	1	vs. Texas %	W	39-27
Dec.	29	vs. Alabama &	L	34-45

#Dallas %Arlington &CFB Playoff Semifinal

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	BIG 12	NATIONAL
Scoring	48.4 ppg	1	1
Rushing	247.4 ypg	1	11
Passing	322.9 ypg	3	7
Total	570.3 ypg	1	1
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**BIG 12**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	33.3 ppg	10	101
Rushing	159.8 ypg	6	59
Passing	294.0 ypg	10	130
Total	453.8 ypg	10	114
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**BIG 1**	**NATIONAL**
-2	-0.14	5	81

2019 RECRUITS

1. Jordan Haselwood, WR, Ellenwood, GA
2. Spencer Rattler, QB, Phoenix, AZ
3. Theo Wease, WR, Allen, TX
4. Trejan Bridges, WR, Carrollton, TX
5. Austin Stogner, TE, Plano, TX
6. Jeremiah Criddell, S, Santa Ana, CA
7. Stacey Wilkins, OT, Camden, AR
8. Woodi Washington, CB, Murfreesboro, TN
9. Joseph Weté, LB, Washington, DC
10. Jaden Davis, CB, Fort Lauderdale, FL
11. Marcus Stripling, DE, Houston, TX
12. EJ Ndoma-Ogar, OG, Allen, TX
13. Marcus Major, RB, Oklahoma City, OK
14. Marcus Hicks, DE, Wichita, KS
15. Jamal Morris, S, Richmond, TX
16. David Ugwoegbu, LB, Katy, TX
17. Marcus Alexander, OG, Sunnyvale, TX
18. Kori Roberson, DE, Manvel, TX
19. Rhamondre Stevenson, RB, Las Vegas, NV
20. Jonathan Perkins, LB, San Bernardino, CA
21. Finley Felix, OT, Fort Myers, FL*
23. Ty DeArman, DB, Arlington, TX
24. LarRon Stokes, DE, Tulsa, OK*

*junior college transfer

Recruits ranked according to the 247SportsComposite

Jay Biggerstaff

ADVANCED STATS

5 Factors: College Football's Most Important Stats

Field Position[1]		Rank
Offense	29.3	85
Defense	28.4	41
Margin	+0.9	58

Efficiency[2]		Rank
Offense	54.9%	2
Defense	47.4%	119
Margin	+7.5%	19

Explosiveness[3]		Rank
Offense	8.6	1
Defense	6.1	102
Margin	+2.5	3

Finishing Drives[4]		Rank
Offense	5.7	1
Defense	5.2	120
Margin	+0.5	35

Adjusted TO Margin[5]		Rank
Projected	5.3	25
Actual	-2	81
Margin	-7.3	122

KEY: 1-Average starting field position by yard line; **2**-Rate of successful plays (gaining 50% of necessary yards on 1st down, 70% on 2nd down, 100% on 3rd down); **3**-Explosiveness=yards per play; **4**-Points per trip inside 40-yard line; **5**-TO margin accounting for "luck" • Advanced stats provided by Bill Connelly of SB Nation

NUMBERS TO KNOW

54.9/47.4

Oklahoma produced the second-highest success rate in the country (percentage of plays that gained at least 50 percent of necessary yardage on first down, 70 percent on second, or 100 percent on third or fourth) at 54.9 percent. Unfortunately, the Sooners also allowed the 12th highest, at 47.4 percent.

20+

It's not just the efficiency, though — it's also the explosiveness. The Sooners are the only team to have ranked in the FBS top five in 20-yard gains in each of the last three years.

4

The Sooners have twice as many conference titles in the last four years (four) as Kansas has conference wins (two). But there's still something to shoot for: Oklahoma won or shared eight in a row in the 1970s.

And seriously, the Sooners need to play mean, something that's been noticeably lacking in recent years. Grinch brings intensity and emphasizes running to the ball and creating turnovers. Oklahoma should have good enough players to avoid ranking No. 130 (dead last) in pass defense, as it did in 2018.

"Believe me, if I could get [No. 130] tattooed on every single one of them, I would," Grinch says.

The Sooners also ranked last in the Big 12 in total defense and scoring defense, so there's plenty amiss.

"We believe we're going to be a totally new defense," says cornerback Tre Brown.

OK, but seeing is believing. And in the fast-paced, fling-the-football Big 12, seeing good defense is a rare occurrence.

Grinch has nine returning starters to work with, for whatever that's worth. Linebacker Kenneth Murray has star potential as a tackling machine, posting nine games of double-digit stops a year ago. Veteran linemen Neville Gallimore and Kenneth Mann have played a lot and could benefit from the new voice of Grinch. Five starters return in the secondary, although it's a group that has often looked lost.

So all eyes are on the Grinch. And he's up for the spotlight, putting players on alert with a call for credibility. His credibility is now at stake as well, beginning this fall.

SPECIALISTS OU's kicking game is in transition, with youngsters set to take over the major roles. Freshman Gabe Brkic exited spring as the frontrunner to handle placekicking, while sophomore Reeves Mundschau seems entrenched as the next punter. The return game should be solid, with Brown (kickoffs) and Lamb (punts) both ranking among the Big 12 leaders in 2018.

FINAL ANALYSIS How Hurts performs will likely determine the success of the Sooners' season, to a point. But an improved defense seems necessary if the Sooners are going to go from just being in the hunt to truly fitting the mold of a national champ. "If we were a little better, we would probably have a national championship right now," Brown says. "So we're just trying to focus on that and be better."

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (4)

WR	2	**CeeDee Lamb (Jr.)**	11	Jadon Haselwood (Fr.)
WR	83	Nick Basquine (Sr.)	10	Theo Wease (Fr.)
WR	14	Charleston Rambo (So.)	8	Trejan Bridges (Fr.)
LT	77	Erik Swenson (Jr.)	70	Brey Walker (Fr.)
LG	54	Marquis Hayes (So.)	79	Darrell Simpson (Fr.)
C	**56**	**Creed Humphrey (So.)**	69	Clayton Woods (Sr.)
RG	52	Tyrese Robinson (So.)	65	Finley Felix (Jr.)
RT	59	Adrian Ealy (So.)	62	David Swaby (So.)
TE	**80**	**Grant Calcaterra (Jr.)**	18	Austin Stogner (Fr.)
QB	1	Jalen Hurts (Sr.)	15	Tanner Mordecai (Fr.)
RB	**4**	**Trey Sermon (Jr.)**	26	Kennedy Brooks (So.)

DEFENSE (9)

Returning Starters in Bold

DE	**7**	**Ronnie Perkins (So.)**	96	LaRon Stokes (Jr.)
DT	**90**	**Neville Gallimore (Sr.)**	91	Dillon Faamatau (Sr.)
DE	**55**	**Kenneth Mann (Sr.)**	31	Jalen Redmond (Fr.)
MLB	**9**	**Kenneth Murray (Jr.)**	21	Ryan Jones (So.)
WLB	23	DaShaun White (So.)	38	Bryan Mead (Jr.)
OLB	42	Mark Jackson (Sr.)	35	Nik Bonitto (Fr.)
NB	**13**	**Tre Norwood (Jr.)**	**44**	**Brendan Radley-Hiles (So.)**
CB	**6**	**Tre Brown (Jr.)**	25	Justin Broiles (So.)
CB	**11**	**Parnell Motley (Sr.)**	16	Miguel Edwards (Fr.)
FS	**20**	**Robert Barnes (Jr.)**	10	Patrick Fields (So.)
SS	32	Delarrin Turner-Yell (So.)	28	Chanse Sylvie (Jr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	47	Gabe Brkic (Fr.)	KR	6	Tre Brown (Jr.)
P	46	Reeves Mundschau (So.)	PR	2	CeeDee Lamb (Jr.)

2018 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Kyler Murray	377	260	4,361	42	7
Austin Kendall	17	12	122	1	0

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD
Kennedy Brooks	**119**	**1,056**	**8.9**	**12**
Kyler Murray	140	1,001	7.2	12
Trey Sermon	**164**	**947**	**5.8**	**13**
T.J. Pledger	**30**	**179**	**6.0**	**0**

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Marquise Brown	75	1,318	17.6	10
CeeDee Lamb	**65**	**1,158**	**17.8**	**11**
Grant Calcaterra	**26**	**396**	**15.2**	**6**
Lee Morris	**21**	**457**	**21.8**	**8**

KICKING: Austin Seibert, 17-19 FGs, 138 pts.

TACKLES: **Kenneth Murray, 155;** Curtis Bolton, 139

SACKS: **Ronnie Perkins, 5.0**

INTERCEPTIONS: **Parnell Motley, 3**

Returning Players in **Bold**

SCOUTING THE SOONERS

OPPOSING COACHES SIZE UP OKLAHOMA

"The standard for our conference. The team to beat every year. You're just blown away by their tape on offense. They have tremendous skill on that side of the ball. They're losing three guys on the line this year and I'd bet they're still the best offensive line in the Big 12. Nasty, athletic, NFL guys. For the most part they were able to scheme and block Georgia and Alabama, so that tells you they're pretty dang amazing. … Jalen (Hurts) is a winner — now we'll see if that's a system deal at Bama or if he has that kind of intangible. They're going to specialize what they'll call for him, but he'll be in space more than he would at Bama. … Defensively is where you start asking questions. (Defensive coordinator) Alex Grinch has a great reputation, and obviously they've got work to do here. They need to work on pass rush, and they need to blow up that secondary and start over. They don't really lose a lot of guys, but I think they're going to shuffle a bunch of starters around and get a fresh start. … Probably the most comfortable team I've ever seen in a shootout. They don't get tense. … Certainly a favorite to win the conference if Jalen clicks with what they want, but they're a ways off on defense. You'd like to see them get as good at landing some talent for that back end as they are at skill position offensive guys."

Oklahoma State **Cowboys**

National Forecast: **31** • Big 12 Prediction: **4** • Projected Record: **8-4, 5-4 Big 12**

Tylan Wallace

Jay Biggerstaff

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Mike Gundy
Record at School: 121-59 (14 years)
Career Record: 121-59 (14 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Sean Gleeson
Defensive Coordinator: Jim Knowles
Location: Stillwater, OK
Stadium: Boone Pickens Stadium (60,218)

KEY COWBOYS

TYLAN WALLACE, WR In his first full season as a starter, Wallace blossomed into a star, earning All-America honors and finishing as a finalist for the Biletnikoff Award.

CHUBA HUBBARD, RB Breakout freshman rushed for 740 yards — 425 over the final four games, when he took over as the starter.

A.J. GREEN, CB Regularly assigned to the league's best receivers, Green finished among the league leaders with 11 pass break-ups.

KEY LOSSES

JUSTICE HILL, RB A two-time All-Big 12 performer, Hill saw his season and career end last November with a rib injury.

JORDAN BRAILFORD, DE The Cowboys put Brailford's versatility to use. He led the team with nine sacks and 16 tackles for a loss.

JUSTIN PHILLIPS, LB The man in the middle of the Cowboys' defense posted a team-high 98 tackles.

RISING STAR

Fans clamored for QB **SPENCER SANDERS** throughout last season, as the former Texas prep star was stashed as a redshirt. Considered the state's premier quarterback prospect, he won't wait any longer, bringing his dual-threat skills to an offense already loaded with options.

Oklahoma State scuffled through 2018, needing an upset win over Missouri in the Liberty Bowl to avoid the program's first losing season since Mike Gundy's head coaching debut in 2005.

And more questions than certainties accompanied the team into the offseason. Good news: The Cowboys are confident they have the necessary answers, at least in getting back close to the 10-win seasons that had become the norm before last year's 7–6 finish.

Much will depend on the new quarterback, almost certain to be touted redshirt freshman Spencer Sanders, as weapons are plentiful everywhere else. Defense in the Big 12 rarely runs reliable, yet Oklahoma State has playmakers on that side, too, especially among the back seven.

OFFENSE Sean Gleeson steps in as coordinator, replacing Mike Yurcich, who left for Ohio State. The Cowboys won't abandon the spread attack that's defined their exciting brand, but Gleeson's imprint should be noticeable, featuring elements of the innovative schemes that fueled Princeton's rise to the top of the FCS scoring chart.

Gleeson's concepts, along with the influence of new line coach Charlie Dickey, figure to involve more quarterback run option, a natural fit for Sanders. A dynamic dual-threat quarterback in high school, Sanders went 46–6 as a four-year starter. "He's got a fantastic arm and has the ability to make plays and run," Gundy says.

Sanders battled former Hawaii starter Dru Brown in the spring, and the competition is set to continue into August. Still, Sanders' versatility and enticing upside make him the man to beat.

The new quarterback will enjoy an array of proven playmakers, led by wideout Tylan Wallace. The fast and physical Wallace ranked second nationally in receiving with 1,491 yards, earning first-team All-America honors and finishing as a finalist for the Biletnikoff Award. Dillon Stoner and Landon Wolf also return, and emerging threats are lined up to join the fun, including converted quarterback Jelani Woods at tight end.

Even after losing standout running back Justice Hill late last season, the ground game remained strong, with Chuba Hubbard averaging 106.3 yards per game against Oklahoma, West Virginia, TCU and Missouri. Hubbard, a junior track star in Canada, adds vision and cut-back skills to his bursts. Competition for playing time is stiff behind Hubbard, with LD Brown, Dezmon Jackson, Jahmyl Jeter and incoming freshman Deondrick Glass, a four-star Texas prospect, all in the mix.

Dickey, the former architect of Kansas State's stellar offensive lines, inherits returning starters in Marcus Keyes, Johnny Wilson and Teven Jenkins, who form the core of a solid unit.

DEFENSE The recurring theme in Stillwater, if not across the Big 12, is whether respect can be gained on defense. One hope for the Cowboys is that Year 2 under coordinator Jim Knowles brings more continuity and consistency. There's plenty of room for improvement, after

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	30	at Oregon State
Sept.	7	McNeese
Sept.	14	at Tulsa
Sept.	21	at Texas
Sept.	28	Kansas State
Oct.	5	at Texas Tech
Oct.	19	Baylor
Oct.	26	at Iowa State
Nov.	2	TCU
Nov.	16	Kansas
Nov.	23	at West Virginia
Nov.	30	Oklahoma

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 7-6, 3-6 BIG 12

Aug.	30	Missouri State	W	58-17
Sept.	8	South Alabama	W	55-13
Sept.	15	Boise State	W	44-21
Sept.	22	Texas Tech	L	17-41
Sept.	29	at Kansas	W	48-28
Oct.	6	Iowa State	L	42-48
Oct.	13	at Kansas State	L	12-31
Oct.	27	Texas	W	38-35
Nov.	3	at Baylor	L	31-35
Nov.	10	at Oklahoma	L	47-48
Nov.	17	West Virginia	W	45-41
Nov.	24	at TCU	L	24-31
Dec.	31	vs. Missouri #	W	38-33

#Liberty Bowl

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	BIG 12	NATIONAL
Scoring	38.4 ppg	3	13
Rushing	190.3 ypg	2	46
Passing	309.8 ypg	4	10
Total	500.2 ypg	3	10
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**BIG 12**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	32.5 ppg	9	97
Rushing	185.4 ypg	10	87
Passing	267.1 ypg	8	118
Total	452.5 ypg	9	112
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**BIG 12**	**NATIONAL**
-9	-0.69	9	118

2019 RECRUITS

1. Grayson Boomer, TE, Collinsville, OK
2. Deondrick Glass, RB, Katy, TX
3. Langston Anderson, WR, Midlothian, TX
4. Trace Ford, DE, Edmond, OK
5. Brendan Costello, QB, San Clemente, CA
6. Cole Birmingham, OT, Katy, TX
7. Jayden Jernigan, DT, Allen, TX
8. Kamryn Farrar, LB, Dallas, TX
9. Preston Wilson, C, Bartonville, TX
10. Taylor Miterko, OT, Carlsbad, NM
11. Demarco Jones, CB, Tulsa, OK
12. Isreal Isuman-Hundley, DE, Colleyville, TX
13. Sione Asi, DT, Reno, NV*
14. Xavier Ross, DT, Cedar Hill, TX
15. Na'Drian Dizadare, LB, Shreveport, LA
16. Joe Michalski, OT, Overland Park, KS
17. Thomas Harper, CB, Knoxville, TN
18. Xavier Player, CB, Cibolo, TX
19. Kody Walterscheid, DE, Muenster, TX
20. Tom Hutton, P, Victoria, Australia
21. Dezmon Jackson, RB, El Dorado, AK*

*junior college transfer

Recruits ranked according to the 247SportsComposite

ADVANCED STATS

5 Factors: College Football's Most Important Stats

Field Position[1]		Rank
Offense	29.0	94
Defense	28.6	46
Margin	**+0.4**	**66**

Efficiency[2]		Rank
Offense	46.3%	23
Defense	41.8%	74
Margin	**+4.5%**	**38**

Explosiveness[3]		Rank
Offense	6.4	15
Defense	6.0	99
Margin	**+0.4**	**56**

Finishing Drives[4]		Rank
Offense	5.1	22
Defense	4.5	69
Margin	**+0.6**	**30**

Adjusted TO Margin[5]		Rank
Projected	-6.1	117
Actual	-9	117
Margin	**-2.9**	**95**

KEY: 1-Average starting field position by yard line; **2**-Rate of successful plays (gaining 50% of necessary yards on 1st down, 70% on 2nd down, 100% on 3rd down); **3**-Explosiveness=yards per play; **4**-Points per trip inside 40-yard line; **5**-TO margin accounting for "luck" • Advanced stats provided by Bill Connelly of SB Nation

NUMBERS TO KNOW

66

After ranking third in the nation in passes of 20-plus yards in 2017 (72 in all), OSU lost stars Mason Rudolph and James Washington and fell — all the way to fourth in 2018 (66).

24.9

OSU opponents threw 173 incompletions in 2018, and only 43 — 24.9 percent, 125th in FBS — were the result of an OSU interception or pass breakup. The Cowboys were active from the perspective of tackles for a loss (96 of them, 20th overall), but when the ball was in the air, OSU defenders weren't nearby.

13

The Liberty Bowl win kept a streak alive. The Pokes have finished above .500 for 13 straight years. They'd done so only 14 times in the 30 years before Mike Gundy took over.

the Cowboys ranked No. 97 in scoring defense and No. 112 in total defense. It wasn't all bad, as the defense averaged 3.0 sacks per game, good for 10th nationally.

In the secondary, Oklahoma State finds valuable strength. Corners A.J. Green and Rodarius Williams, with 52 combined career starts between them, are all-conference caliber and able to match up with the league's elite receivers.

Forced to play three true freshmen at safety in 2018, the Cowboys should now benefit. And those rookie debuts weren't all bad, with Kolby Peel, Jarrick Bernard and Tanner McCalister showing promise. All three will play key roles again, along with Malcolm Rodriguez, the team's leading returning tackler.

There's talent but little depth at linebacker. Calvin Bundage, in his third season as a starter, plays at a frenetic pace but must be more consistent. Devin Harper is expected to start opposite Bundage, but he missed the spring with an injury.

The big question rests up front, where six players — representing all four starters and two key backups — have moved on. The Cowboys got a boost in the offseason when Colorado transfer Israel Antwine, who started 11 games last year as a freshman, was ruled immediately eligible, and Bowling Green's Kyle Junior joined the program as a grad transfer. Those two ends will bring experience, fortifying an otherwise young group.

SPECIALISTS Placekicker Matt Ammendola enters 2019 sixth on the NCAA's active scoring list. Gundy reached to Australia for his next punter in 29-year-old Tom Hutton, a veteran of the same ProKick Australia program that has produced three former Ray Guy Award winners. The Cowboys are looking to infuse life into their return game.

FINAL ANALYSIS Oklahoma State probably should have been better than 7–6 a year ago, when it lost four games as a favorite, and it figures to push the wins mark up in 2019. But how high?

The schedule is favorable, with a light nonconference opening serving as a break-in opportunity for the new quarterback ahead of the Big 12 opener at Texas. And QB play will be critical, with all the other pieces in place on offense and a need to keep pushing the pedal and score.

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (5)

WR	2	**Tylan Wallace (Jr.)**	85	Patrick McKaufman (Jr.)
WR	17	**Dillon Stoner (Jr.)**	1	Landon Wolf (Jr.)
WR	10	Tyrell Alexander (Jr.)		Jordan McCray (Sr.)
LT	76	Dylan Galloway (Jr.)	78	Bryce Bray (Fr.)
LG	75	**Marcus Keyes (Sr.)**	77	Hunter Anthony (Fr.)
C	72	**Johnny Wilson (Sr.)**	60	Tyrese Williams (Fr.)
RG	50	Ry Schneider (Jr.)	70	Hunter Woodard (Fr.)
RT	73	**Teven Jenkins (Jr.)**	52	Jacob Farrell (Fr.)
TE	89	Jelani Woods (So.)	87	Logan Carter (Jr.)
QB	3	Spencer Sanders (Fr.)	6	Dru Brown (Sr.)
RB	30	Chuba Hubbard (So.)	7	LD Brown (Jr.)

DEFENSE (5)

Returning Starters in Bold

DE	91	Mike Scott (Sr.)		Kyle Junior (Sr.)
DT	98	Brendon Evers (So.)	97	Amadou Fofana (Jr.)
DT	92	Cameron Murray (Jr.)	99	Sione Asi (Jr.)
DE	95	Israel Antwine (So.)	40	Brock Martin (So.)
ILB	16	Devin Harper (Jr.)	33	Kevin Henry (Sr.)
OLB	1	**Calvin Bundage (Sr.)**	11	Amen Ogbongbemiga (Jr.)
CB	4	**A.J. Green (Sr.)**	14	Bryce Balous (Sr.)
CB	8	**Rodarius Williams (Jr.)**	5	Kemah Siverand (Sr.)
S	31	Kolby Peel (So.)	25	Jason Taylor II (Fr.)
S	20	**Malcolm Rodriguez (Jr.)**	15	Sean Michael Flanagan (Fr.)
S	24	**Jarrick Bernard (So.)**	2	Tanner McCalister (So.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	49	Matt Ammendola (Sr.)	KR	28	Jahmyl Jeter (Fr.)
P	29	Tom Hutton (Fr.)	PR	10	Tyrell Alexander (Jr.)

2018 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Taylor Cornelius	485	288	3,978	32	13
Keondre Wudtee	5	2	26	1	0

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD
Justice Hill	158	930	5.9	9
Chuba Hubbard	**124**	**740**	**6.0**	**7**
Taylor Cornelius	122	406	3.3	10
LD Brown	27	163	6.0	1

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Tylan Wallace	**86**	**1,491**	**17.3**	**12**
Tyron Johnson	53	845	15.9	7
Dillon Stoner	**48**	**603**	**12.6**	**2**
Landon Wolf	**33**	**362**	**11.0**	**2**

KICKING: **Matt Ammendola, 16-22 FGs, 109 pts.**

TACKLES: Justin Phillips, 98; **Malcolm Rodriguez, 83**

SACKS: Jordan Brailford, 9.0

INTERCEPTIONS: **Rodarius Williams, 2**

Returning Players in **Bold**

SCOUTING THE COWBOYS

OPPOSING COACHES SIZE UP OKLAHOMA STATE

"Probably the best thing you can say about a program is that they're not afraid of changing what they do best. This year they're losing their offensive coordinator and line coach, and they won't really miss a beat. Mike Gundy has reinvented that offense enough times that you know they'll be ready. … The OC hire (Sean Gleeson) was a good one — they did some innovative stuff at Princeton. … It's hard to tell what (defensive coordinator) Jim Knowles was doing last year. That defense was all over the map. Game to game they looked totally different, sometimes even in their base. Something went wrong early; either he didn't understand the personnel or he asked them to do something they couldn't. … At their best they're a poor man's Oklahoma. They can get comfortable going touchdown for touchdown with you. Then at their worst they're a rich man's Texas Tech, where you can knock 'em off schedule a little bit and they can't catch up and can't create stops. … They've got to find a solution on defense. That's what's held them back from a conference title these last few years. They're really close. They develop offensive guys as well as anyone in the country, but they're the program that really defines the negative take on Big 12 football. They can shoot the lights out but can't stop a sneeze."

TCU **Horned Frogs**

National Forecast: **37** • Big 12 Prediction: **6** • Projected Record: **8-4, 5-4 Big 12**

Darius Anderson

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Gary Patterson
Record at School: 167-63 (18+ years)
Career Record: 167-63 (18+ years)
Offensive Coordinators: Sonny Cumbie, Curtis Luper
Defensive Coordinator: Chad Glasgow
Location: Fort Worth, TX
Stadium: Amon G. Carter Stadium (45,000)

KEY HORNED FROGS

JALEN REAGOR, WR Caught a TD pass in a TCU-record seven consecutive games and led TCU in all-purpose yards and scoring.

DARIUS ANDERSON, RB Notched the longest rushing play in TCU history with a 93-yard score against Ohio State.

JEFF GLADNEY, CB Led TCU and was second in the Big 12 with 13 pass break-ups. Surrendered a reception only once every 16.5 coverage snaps, best in the conference.

KEY LOSSES

BEN BANOGU, DE TCU leader in tackles for a loss a year ago and added 8.5 sacks.

L.J. COLLIER, DE Delivered a career-high 6.0 sacks as a senior, among 11.5 tackles for a loss. Recorded four passes defensed.

TY SUMMERS, LB Second-leading tackler in Gary Patterson era (318). Totaled 4.0 sacks, 6.5 tackles for a loss and four QB hurries last season.

RISING STAR

TCU does not throw out comparisons to Jerry Hughes lightly. But much of **OCHAUN MATHIS'** game sparks memories of the powerful former Horned Frogs pass rusher, now a nine-year NFL veteran. The 6'5", 235-pound Mathis, a redshirt freshman, shows the same quick step, speed and power combination.

TCU was a bowl participant for the 19th time in 21 years. The Horned Frogs' less-than-inspiring 10–7 overtime win over Cal in the Cheez-It Bowl resulted in a winning season.

Forgive the Frogs if they didn't celebrate long. Their 7–6 record left a dissatisfied taste they spent an offseason trying to shake.

"We're not good losers," veteran coach Gary Patterson says bluntly.

No, and not frequent losers, either. The Frogs typically get off the mat quickly after subpar seasons. Patterson teams followed four previous campaigns of 7–6 or worse with records of 10–2, 11–1, and 11–3 (with a 4–8 outlier thrown in). Even a respectable 8–5 year in 2007 was followed by an 11–2 mark.

The 2019 squad expects similar improvement. "It's a little bit tougher and a little bit more attention to detail," Patterson says. "You don't have to coach as hard when you don't have a great year, because everybody's worried about everybody saying you're not any good. The head coach doesn't have to say as much, to be honest with you."

The head coach can instead spend his time developing cohesiveness on a squad that returns 12 starters (seven offense, five defense) but was missing 22 players during the spring due to injury, including running backs Darius Anderson and Sewo Olonilua, receiver Jalen Reagor, center Kellton Hollins, guard Wes Harris, tackles Lucas Niang and Austin Myers, defensive tackle Ross Blacklock, safety Innis Gaines, and cornerbacks Jeff Gladney and Julius Lewis. All are major contributors or all-conference performers (Reagor, Niang, Gladney, Blacklock).

The Frogs canceled their spring scrimmage because of the dearth of players and instead held a public practice.

Help came in the form of a 27-member signing class that was ranked third in the Big 12 and 33rd nationally by the 247Sports Composite. It included four-star defensive tackle Karter Johnson of Pickerington, Ohio. The Frogs also added two graduate transfers, defensive end Shameik Blackshear of South Carolina and quarterback Alex Delton of Kansas State.

OFFENSE For a second consecutive year, TCU needs a quarterback. Shawn Robinson's disappointing season ended in injury and a subsequent transfer to Missouri. The Frogs have options aplenty. They bolstered the position with four-star signee Max Duggan and Delton. Already on hand were last year's backup, Michael Collins, and celebrated 2018 four-star signee Justin Rogers, who is nearing full strength two years after he suffered a severe injury at the start of his last high school season in Louisiana. "You know me. The one who makes the other players better is the one who'll play," Patterson says of the quarterback battle.

The QB's top target should be Reagor, who set a TCU record last season with a touchdown catch in seven consecutive games and led the Frogs across all receiving categories. Sophomore H-back Taye Barber, second on the team in catches as a freshman, starred in the offseason.

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	Stephen F. Austin
Sept.	7	UTSA
Sept.	21	at Rice
Sept.	28	Iowa State
Oct.	5	at Kansas State
Oct.	12	Texas Tech
Oct.	19	at Oklahoma State
Oct.	31	West Virginia
Nov.	9	at TCU
Nov.	16	Oklahoma
Nov.	23	Texas
Nov.	30	at Kansas

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 7-6, 4-5 BIG 12

Sept.	1	Southern	W	55-7
Sept.	7	at SMU	W	42-12
Sept.	15	vs. Ohio State #	L	28-40
Sept.	22	at Texas	L	16-31
Sept.	29	Iowa State	W	17-14
Oct.	11	Texas Tech	L	14-17
Oct.	20	Oklahoma	L	27-52
Oct.	27	at Kansas	L	26-27
Nov.	3	Kansas State	W	14-13
Nov.	10	at West Virginia	L	10-47
Nov.	17	at Baylor	W	16-9
Nov.	24	Oklahoma State	W	31-24
Dec.	26	vs. California % (ot)	W	10-7

#Arlington %Cheez-It Bowl

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	BIG 12	NATIONAL
Scoring	23.5 ppg	9	107
Rushing	156.2 ypg	7	82
Passing	211.5 ypg	8	88
Total	367.6 ypg	8	99
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**BIG 12**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	23.1 ppg	2	40
Rushing	138.6 ypg	3	34
Passing	199.6 ypg	1	37
Total	338.2 ypg	1	24
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**BIG 12**	**NATIONAL**
-5	-0.38	8	101

2019 RECRUITS

1. Max Duggan, QB, Council Bluffs, IA
2. Daimarqua Foster, RB, Wichita Falls, TX
3. Karter Johnson, DT, Pickerington, OH
4. Colt Ellison, DE, Aledo, TX
5. Darwin Barlow, RB, Newton, TX
6. Dylan Jordan, LB, Pittsburg, KS
7. Andrew Coker, OT, Katy, TX
8. Donavann Collins, CB, Cedar Hill, TX
9. Earl Barquet, DL, Marrero, LA
10. Dee Winters, ATH, Brenham, TX
11. Brannon Brown, OG, San Antonio, TX
12. Adam Plant, DL, Las Vegas, NV
13. Deshawn McCuin, S, Jacksonville, TX
14. Nook Bradford, S, Helotes, TX
15. Blair Conwright, WR, Lubbock, TX
16. Zach Marcheselli, LB, Broken Arrow, OK
17. Wyatt Harris, LB, Aledo, TX
18. Josh Foster, DB, Newton, TX
19. Mikel Barkley, WR, Temecula, CA*
20. Parker Workman, DL, Ephraim, UT
21. Marcus Williams, OT, Longview, TX
22. Tre'Vius Hodges-Tomlinson, DB, Waco, TX
23. Tony Wallace, CB, Las Vegas, NV*
24. Kee'yon Stewart, CB, Houston, TX
25. Soni Misi, DT, Rohnert Park, CA*
26. Thomas Armstrong, DE, Hollywood, FL
27. Jordan Sandy, P, Traralgon, Australia

*junior college transfer

Recruits ranked according to the 247SportsComposite

Tom Lynn

ADVANCED STATS

5 Factors: College Football's Most Important Stats

Field Position[1]		Rank
Offense	30.0	63
Defense	29.9	79
Margin	**+0.1**	**72**

Efficiency[2]		Rank
Offense	41.2%	77
Defense	37.3%	22
Margin	**+3.9%**	**42**

Explosiveness[3]		Rank
Offense	5.3	101
Defense	4.9	23
Margin	**+0.4**	**53**

Finishing Drives[4]		Rank
Offense	3.7	124
Defense	4.7	81
Margin	**-1.0**	**122**

Adjusted TO Margin[5]		Rank
Projected	-8.5	124
Actual	-5	100
Margin	**+3.5**	**29**

KEY: 1-Average starting field position by yard line; **2**-Rate of successful plays (gaining 50% of necessary yards on 1st down, 70% on 2nd down, 100% on 3rd down); **3**-Explosiveness=yards per play; **4**-Points per trip inside 40-yard line; **5**-TO margin accounting for "luck" • Advanced stats provided by Bill Connelly of SB Nation

NUMBERS TO KNOW

37.3

The TCU defense allowed a success rate (percentage of plays that gained at least 50 percent of necessary yardage on first down, 70 percent on second, or 100 percent on third or fourth) of just 37.3 percent, 22nd overall and first in the Big 12.

-12/+7

Turnovers are important for everyone, but they were vital for TCU. In six losses, the Horned Frogs suffered a turnover margin of minus-12; in seven wins, plus-7.

3.7

You've gotta finish: TCU averaged just 3.7 points per scoring opportunity (first downs inside the opponent's 40) in 2018, worst in the conference and 124th overall. Not only did the Frogs struggle to create as many chances, but they also failed to convert the chances they got.

Running back is stocked with experience in seniors Anderson, a shifty burner, and Olonilua, a 231-pounder who rocked a career-high 194 yards in the Cheez-It Bowl.

The offensive line welcomes back four starters, most notably Niang, an all-conference right tackle.

DEFENSE Linebackers and safeties are the backbone of a Patterson defense. The problem is that the veteran coach lost more than 400 stops with the departure of linebackers Ty Summers and Arrico Evans and 44 games of experience in graduated safety Niko Small.

Junior hybrid linebacker Garret Wallow is the leading returning tackler. He's joined by senior Montrel Wilson, who has played only 10 games the past three seasons because of injury but remains one of the team's best all-around athletes.

The Frogs replace talent with inexperienced talent at defensive end. Redshirt freshman Ochaun Mathis and true freshman Adam Plant have played in four games combined, all by Mathis. They're joined by Blackshear. In the interior, veteran defensive tackle Corey Bethley (5.0 sacks in '18) is paired with Blacklock, who missed last season with an Achilles injury.

Gladney emerged as the Big 12's best corner a year ago. Fast and physical, the 6'0" senior enters 2019 as one of the Big 12's top pro prospects.

SPECIALISTS TCU joined the recent trend of expeditions Down Under to sign Jordy Sandy, an Australian rugby-style punter. Experience is on the side of placekickers Cole Bunce and Jonathan Song, seniors who have kicked since they were freshmen. The return game is looking for a dynamic replacement for KaVontae Turpin.

FINAL ANALYSIS TCU fielded the Big 12's top-ranked unit in total defense and pass defense and the second-best scoring defense a season ago. Don't expect much to change. Patterson has another outstanding group of athletes, particularly at cornerback. Offensively, quarterback is the variable. Big 12-level skill is all over the field, highlighted by the ultra-competitive Reagor, and the offensive line is experienced. With health and turnover luck, the Frogs can reasonably picture double-digit wins. Throw in high-level quarterback play, and they can set their sights higher.

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (7)

WR	**1**	**Jalen Reagor (Jr.)**	19	Ni'Jeel Meeking (So.)
WR	11	Dylan Thomas (Jr.)	7	John Stephens (So.)
WR	4	Taye Barber (So.)	12	Derius Davis (So.)
LT	**68**	**Anthony McKinney (Sr.)**	**56**	**Austin Myers (Jr.)**
LG	70	Cordel Iwuagwu (Sr.)	60	Nate Guyton (Sr.)
C	69	Coy McMillon (So.)	**55**	**Kellton Hollins (Jr.)**
RG	78	Wes Harris (So.)	79	Esteban Avila (Fr.)
RT	**77**	**Lucas Niang (Sr.)**	62	David Bolisomi (Sr.)
TE	88	Artayvious Lynn (Jr.)	81	Pro Wells (So.)
QB	16	Alex Delton (Sr.)	13	Justin Rogers (Fr.)
RB	**6**	**Darius Anderson (Sr.)**	**33**	**Sewo Olonilua (Sr.)**

DEFENSE (5)

Returning Starters in Bold

DE	32	Ochaun Mathis (Fr.)	98	Adam Plant (Fr.)
DT	**94**	**Corey Bethley (Jr.)**	93	George Ellis (So.)
DT	90	Ross Blacklock (Jr.)	95	Terrell Cooper (So.)
DE		Shameik Blackshear (Sr.)	41	Brandon Bowen (Jr.)
LB	**30**	**Garret Wallow (Jr.)**	20	La'Kendrick Van Zandt (So.)
LB	11	Montrel Wilson (Sr.)	18	Ben Wilson (So.)
CB	**12**	**Jeff Gladney (Sr.)**	4	Keenan Reed (Sr.)
CB	21	Noah Daniels (So.)	**24**	**Julius Lewis (Sr.)**
FS	17	Trevon Moehrig (So.)	9	Atanza Vongor (Fr.)
SS	**6**	**Innis Gaines (Sr.)**	28	Nook Bradford (Fr.)
WS	26	Vernon Scott (Sr.)	27	Ar'Darius Washington (Fr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	37	Cole Bunce (Sr.)	**KR**	1	Jalen Reagor (Jr.)
P	31	Jordy Sandy (Fr.)	**PR**	4	Taye Barber (So.)

2018 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Shawn Robinson	204	124	1,334	9	8
Mike Collins	**140**	**79**	**1,059**	**6**	**2**
Grayson Muehlstein	63	35	355	3	4

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD
Sewo Olonilua	**135**	**635**	**4.7**	**2**
Darius Anderson	**124**	**598**	**4.8**	**3**
Shawn Robinson	49	230	4.7	3
Emari Demercado	**57**	**224**	**3.9**	**0**

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Jalen Reagor	**72**	**1,061**	**14.7**	**9**
Taye Barber	**32**	**303**	**9.5**	**2**
KaVontae Turpin	29	410	14.1	3

KICKING: Jonathan Song, 9-12 FGs, 52 pts; Cole Bunce, 4-9 FGs, 24 pts.

TACKLES: Arico Evans, 82; Ridwan Issahaku, 80

SACKS: Ben Banogu, 8.5

INTERCEPTIONS: 3 players tied with 2

Returning Players in **Bold**

SCOUTING THE HORNED FROGS

OPPOSING COACHES SIZE UP TCU

"It could be a really interesting year in Fort Worth. Which team are they going to be? The one who got together down the stretch or the one who put them in the hole?. … The quarterback play hasn't been strong enough the last couple years. Really that's been the difference. They obviously went how their QB did last year. Shawn Robinson probably had the most upside, but he's gone. It's a wide-open race, we think. … They had to get rid of KaVontae Turpin, and they cut him knowing how bad it would hurt their passing game. They need a new outside playmaker type that can guide along the quarterback. … They have a really nice backfield. Darius Anderson can be really great; he's an explosive open-field guy. The question there is how healthy will he be and how often will they use him. … Defensively they're always consistent. It's a brand that Gary (Patterson) has created. Hard, athletic — they do a fantastic job, like NFL good, at evaluating guys who they can get who fit their system. … Right now they could go either way. It's not the most experienced defense Gary's had, but you tend to feel good about that side of the ball. It's really going to come down to quarterback play. They've been a system now for a long time; they've refined their recruiting and development to an art. They just have to get more explosive on offense to keep up."

Texas **Longhorns**

National Forecast: **11** • Big 12 Prediction: **2** • Projected Record: **9-4, 7-2 Big 12**

Sam Ehlinger

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Tom Herman
Record at School: 17-10 (2 years)
Career Record: 39-14 (4 years)
Offensive Coordinators: Tim Beck, Herb Hand
Defensive Coordinators: Craig Naivar, Todd Orlando
Location: Austin, TX
Stadium: Darrell K Royal-Texas Memorial Stadium (100,119)

KEY LONGHORNS

SAM EHLINGER, QB Ehlinger's 41 touchdowns accounted for in 2018 made up 57 percent of the points scored by the Longhorns last season.

COLLIN JOHNSON, WR The 6'6" Johnson barely missed out on a 1,000-yard receiving season last year (985) and had seven TD catches.

BRANDON JONES, S The top returning tackler does it all — breaks up passes, makes stops behind the line and anchors the secondary.

KEY LOSSES

LIL'JORDAN HUMPHREY, WR Texas' leading receiver last year, Humphrey was Ehlinger's favorite target when a big play was needed.

GARY JOHNSON, LB Johnson was a disruptive force with 16.5 tackles for a loss (6.5 sacks), two forced fumbles and a fumble recovery.

CHARLES OMENIHU, DE Big 12 Defensive Lineman of the Year led UT in sacks (9.5) and TFLs (18) with a forced fumble and fumble recovery.

RISING STAR

Coaches were blown away by how quickly true freshman running back **JORDAN WHITTINGTON** picked things up in the spring and made plays running and catching the ball. Whittington figures to be half of a one-two punch with sophomore Keaontay Ingram.

A handful of developments in the last year have Texas trending up in Year 3 under Tom Herman:

1) A thrilling, 48–45 victory over Oklahoma last October; 2) reaching the Big 12 title game (where the Longhorns lost a rematch against the Sooners); 3) a dominating victory over Georgia in the Sugar Bowl; and 4) back-to-back top-three recruiting classes.

Whether the Longhorns can improve on last year's 10–4 record in 2019 — with a schedule that includes a Week 2 home game against LSU — will depend on two things: If junior quarterback Sam Ehlinger can match or improve on last season's performance behind a line with three new starters; and if the Horns can adequately replace nine starters on defense.

OFFENSE Ehlinger, whose 41 touchdowns accounted for in 2018 were second in school history to Colt McCoy's 45 TDs in 2008, is the unquestioned leader of the offense and a legitimate Heisman Trophy contender.

Ideally, a one-two running back punch of sophomore Keaontay Ingram and early enrollee freshman Jordan Whittington will help reduce some of Ehlinger's rock 'em, sock 'em rushing attempts.

Ehlinger was forced out of last year's Baylor and Iowa State games with injuries to his throwing shoulder suffered while running the ball. Texas won those games thanks to the solid play of backup Shane Buechele, who had 19 starts at UT but graduated in May and transferred to SMU with two seasons of eligibility remaining. Redshirt freshman quarterback Cameron Rising also transferred (to Utah).

Backing up Ehlinger this season will be dual-threat redshirt freshman Casey Thompson, the son of former Oklahoma quarterback Charles Thompson, and early enrollee freshman Roschon Johnson. Coaches are excited about Thompson's upside.

Even though last year's leading receiver Lil'Jordan Humphrey entered the NFL Draft after his junior season, Texas still has senior receivers Collin Johnson, a 6'6" matchup problem, and Devin Duvernay, an underutilized speedster, as well as five-star freshman Bru McCoy, who transferred from USC in January.

On the offensive line, Samuel Cosmi moves from right tackle to left tackle, while senior Zach Shackelford returns at center. There will be three new starters on the line. The question is if Georgia Tech graduate transfer left guard Parker Braun, a first-team All-ACC selection last season, is one of them. Braun has expressed a desire to redshirt this season to work on his strength and pass protection while also completing his MBA at Texas' McCombs School of Business. If Braun redshirts, the new starters on the line are likely to be redshirt freshman Junior Angilau at left guard, junior Derek Kerstetter at right guard and junior Denzel Okafor at right tackle.

DEFENSE Todd Orlando's defense took a step back against the run and on third down in 2018 after leading the nation in non-offensive TDs (seven) in 2017. And

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	Louisiana Tech
Sept.	7	LSU
Sept.	14	at Rice #
Sept.	21	Oklahoma State
Oct.	5	at West Virginia
Oct.	12	vs. Oklahoma %
Oct.	19	Kansas
Oct.	26	at TCU
Nov.	9	Kansas State
Nov.	16	at Iowa State
Nov.	23	at Baylor
Nov.	29	Texas Tech

#NRG Stadium %Dallas

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 10-4, 7-2 BIG 12

Sept.	1	vs. Maryland #	L	29-34
Sept.	8	Tulsa	W	28-21
Sept.	15	USC	W	37-14
Sept.	22	TCU	W	31-16
Sept.	29	at Kansas State	W	19-14
Oct.	6	vs. Oklahoma %	W	48-45
Oct.	13	Baylor	W	23-17
Oct.	27	at Oklahoma State	L	35-38
Nov.	3	West Virginia	L	41-42
Nov.	10	at Texas Tech	W	41-34
Nov.	17	Iowa State	W	24-10
Nov.	23	at Kansas	W	24-17
Dec.	1	vs. Oklahoma &	L	27-39
Jan.	1	vs. Georgia $	W	28-21

#Landover %Dallas &Arlington $Sugar Bowl

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	BIG 12	NATIONAL
Scoring	31.1 ppg	5	45
Rushing	153.1 ypg	8	91
Passing	258.5 ypg	6	35
Total	411.6 ypg	6	58
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**BIG 12**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	25.9 ppg	4	57
Rushing	131.4 ypg	2	28
Passing	261.4 ypg	7	110
Total	392.8 ypg	3	67
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**BIG 12**	**NATIONAL**
+9	+0.64	2	19

2019 RECRUITS

1. Bru McCoy, WR, Palos Verdes, CA
2. Jordan Whittington, ATH, Cuero, TX
3. Jake Smith, WR, Scottsdale, AZ
4. Tyler Johnson, OT, Conroe, TX
5. DeGabriel Floyd, LB, Westlake Village, CA
6. Tyler Owens, S, Plano, TX
7. Kenyatta Watson, CB, Loganville, GA
8. Marcus Washington, WR, St. Louis, MO
9. David Gbenda, LB, Katy, TX
10. Brayden Liebrock, TE, Chandler, AZ
11. Chris Adimora, S, Lakewood, CA
12. Derrian Brown, RB, Buford, GA
13. Roschon Johnson, QB, Port Arthur, TX
14. Isaiah Hookfin, OT, Sugar Land, TX
15. Myron Warren, DE, Many, LA
16. Javonne Shepherd, OT, Houston, TX
17. Jacoby Jones, DE, St. Louis, MO*
18. Marcus Tillman Jr., LB, Orlando, FL
19. T'Vondre Sweat, DT, Huntsville, TX
20. Peter Mpagi, DE, Sugar Land, TX
21. Caleb Johnson, LB, Murrieta, CA*
22. Kennedy Lewis, WR, Melissa, TX
23. Marques Caldwell, CB, Alvin, TX
24. Jared Wiley, TE, Temple, TX
25. Willie Tyler, OT, Racine, WI*

*junior college transfer

Recruits ranked according to the 247SportsComposite

Bruce Schwartzman

ADVANCED STATS

5 Factors: College Football's Most Important Stats

Field Position[1]		Rank
Offense	29.4	82
Defense	28.6	45
Margin	**+0.8**	**61**

Efficiency[2]		Rank
Offense	45.3%	31
Defense	43.1%	85
Margin	**+2.2%**	**53**

Explosiveness[3]		Rank
Offense	5.5	82
Defense	5.6	61
Margin	**-0.1**	**81**

Finishing Drives[4]		Rank
Offense	4.8	42
Defense	4.3	44
Margin	**+0.5**	**34**

Adjusted TO Margin[5]		Rank
Projected	6.1	16
Actual	9	15
Margin	**+2.9**	**37**

KEY: 1-Average starting field position by yard line; **2**-Rate of successful plays (gaining 50% of necessary yards on 1st down, 70% on 2nd down, 100% on 3rd down); **3**-Explosiveness=yards per play; **4**-Points per trip inside 40-yard line; **5**-TO margin accounting for "luck" • Advanced stats provided by Bill Connelly of SB Nation

NUMBERS TO KNOW

-0.1

Texas averaged 5.5 yards per play (82nd in FBS) and allowed 5.6 (61st), a margin of minus-0.1 (81st overall and seventh in the Big 12).

51/43

Workhorse back: In the five games in which Sam Ehlinger had 15-plus carries, UT's third-down conversion rate was 51 percent, and the Horns went 4–1. In the other nine games: 43 percent, with a 6–3 record.

32.8

On passing downs (second-and-8 or more, third- or fourth-and-5 or more), Texas allowed a 32.8 percent success rate (percentage of plays that gained at least 50 percent of necessary yardage on first down, 70 percent on second, or 100 percent on third or fourth), which ranked just 95th in FBS. Gotta get off the field when you can.

now he has to replace nine starters, including his entire front seven and both starting cornerbacks.

The strength of the defense is at safety, where senior Brandon Jones and 2018 Freshman All-American Caden Sterns are the only two returning starters. There is high-level depth at safety thanks to sophomore DeMarvion Overshown. Nickel back B.J. Foster showed he was a star-in-the-making as a true freshman last season.

There's experience returning on the line, led by ends Malcolm Roach, a senior, and Ta'Quon Graham, a junior. Redshirt freshman nose tackle Keondre Coburn is a player to watch.

There's inexperienced talent at linebacker in Joseph Ossai (B-backer), Jeffrey McCulloch (Rover) and Ayodele Adeoye (Mike) as well as at cornerback with Jalen Green, D'Shawn Jamison and Anthony Cook battling it out. Now the question is: How will all those new faces mesh together?

SPECIALISTS Sophomore kicker Cameron Dicker is already a star thanks to his game-winning 40-yard field goal with :09 left in UT's 48–45 win over Oklahoma. Punter Ryan Bujcevski, the Australian cousin of Texas' 2017 Ray Guy Award winner and Seahawks Pro Bowler Michael Dickson, needs to become more consistent. Jamison returned a punt for a TD last season at Kansas State.

FINAL ANALYSIS The hope is Ehlinger's continued maturity in the offense will lead to more explosive plays in the passing game. Last season, Texas was one of just three FBS schools not to have an offensive touchdown of at least 50 yards.

Texas has plenty of talent on defense, especially at safety. Now that talent just needs to gain experience, most notably at linebacker and cornerback. If Texas can stay healthy to help mask some depth issues, and if the defense improves at the rate the offense improved last season, UT could possibly match or improve on last year's 10-win total.

After last year's loss to Oklahoma in the Big 12 title game, Ehlinger made a Tim Tebow-like pledge to do everything in his power to get Texas back to the conference title game and leave with a victory so fans "would never feel this way again."

Four-time defending Big 12 champ OU figures to be the league favorite again. But as Texas showed last season, the Longhorns are closing the gap.

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (5)

WR	9	**Collin Johnson (Sr.)**	85	Malcolm Epps (Fr.)
WR	5	Bru McCoy (Fr.)	14	Josh Moore (So.)
WR	6	**Devin Duvernay (Sr.)**	82	Brennan Eagles (So.)
LT	52	**Samuel Cosmi (So.)**	76	Reese Moore (Fr.)
LG	75	Junior Angilau (Fr.)		Parker Braun (Sr.)
C	56	**Zach Shackelford (Sr.)**	74	Rafiti Ghirmai (Fr.)
RG	68	Derek Kerstetter (Jr.)	67	Tope Imade (Jr.)
RT	78	Denzel Okafor (Jr.)	70	Christian Jones (Fr.)
TE	80	Cade Brewer (Jr.)	81	Reese Leitao (So.)
QB	11	**Sam Ehlinger (Jr.)**	8	Casey Thompson (Fr.)
RB	26	Keaontay Ingram (So.)	21	Jordan Whittington (Fr.)

DEFENSE (2)

Returning Starters in Bold

DE	32	Malcolm Roach (Sr.)	98	Moro Ojomo (Fr.)
NT	99	Keondre Coburn (Fr.)	94	Gerald Wilbon (Sr.)
DE	49	Ta'Quon Graham (Jr.)	42	Marqez Bimage (Jr.)
OLB	46	Joseph Ossai (So.)	50	Byron Vaughns (Fr.)
MLB	40	Ayodele Adeoye (Fr.)	30	Caleb Johnson (Jr.)
WLB	23	Jeffrey McCulloch (Sr.)	13	Marcus Tillman Jr. (Fr.)
NB	25	B.J. Foster (So.)	29	Josh Thompson (Jr.)
CB	17	D'Shawn Jamison (So.)	4	Anthony Cook (So.)
CB	3	Jalen Green (So.)	38	Kobe Boyce (So.)
S	19	**Brandon Jones (Sr.)**	15	Chris Brown (Jr.)
S	7	**Caden Sterns (So.)**	31	DeMarvion Overshown (So.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	17	Cameron Dicker (So.)	KR 17	D'Shawn Jamison (So.)
P	8	Ryan Bujcevski (So.)	PR 17	D'Shawn Jamison (So.)

2018 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Sam Ehlinger	425	275	3,292	25	5
Shane Buechele	44	30	273	2	1

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD
Tre Watson	185	786	4.2	3
Keaontay Ingram	142	708	5.0	3
Sam Ehlinger	164	482	2.9	16
Daniel Young	42	153	3.6	0

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Lil'Jordan Humphrey	86	1,176	13.7	9
Collin Johnson	68	985	14.5	7
Devin Duvernay	41	546	13.3	4
Andrew Beck	28	281	10.0	2

KICKING: **Cameron Dicker, 18-25 FGs, 105 pts.**
TACKLES: Gary Johnson, 90; Anthony Wheeler, 87
SACKS: Charles Omenihu, 9.5
INTERCEPTIONS: **Caden Sterns, 4**

Returning Players in **Bold**

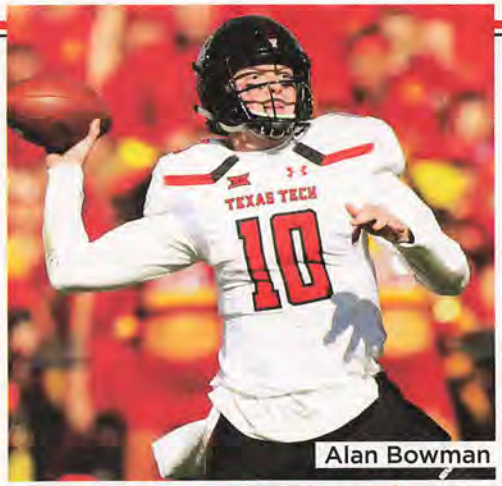
SCOUTING THE LONGHORNS

OPPOSING COACHES SIZE UP TEXAS

"Sam Ehlinger is primed to have a breakout year. He's a dude. Pure football player. Plays hurt, plays hard, has that Tim Tebow intangible in him. Wants to be a great player. If they keep him healthy, they could break through and win the conference. One thing they need to do better is stretch teams out. They didn't threaten you with big explosive plays. It was a lot of 15-, 16-, 17-play drives. You have to maintain a quick scoring threat in this league because eventually everyone's defense breaks down. … They need to bring along their running backs more if they're going to run Ehlinger and not kill him. Keaontay Ingram could be an All-American if they choose to isolate him more. If Ingram steps up they could win this conference on the ground. Tom (Herman) is not afraid of running the ball. He's shown that. He'll call 50 runs if it beats you. … They don't have another wideout as good as Lil'Jordan Humphrey. Him leaving early hurt their plans. … That defense runs a lot of stuff through their secondary. They play a lot of nickel, but their corners and safeties haven't really been great. Replacing their secondary and their defensive line will be interesting. This is the year for Tom where you test your depth and your development. He can recruit, but Charlie Strong could too. … This team can win the conference."

Texas Tech **Red Raiders**

National Forecast: **59** • Big 12 Prediction: **8** • Projected Record: **5-7, 3-6 Big 12**



Alan Bowman

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Matt Wells
Record at School: First Season
Career Record: 44-34 (6 years)
Offensive Coordinator: David Yost
Defensive Coordinator: Keith Patterson
Location: Lubbock, TX
Stadium: Jones AT&T Stadium (60,454)

KEY RED RAIDERS

ALAN BOWMAN, QB Started in seven games and set the Big 12 single-game record for a freshman with 605 passing yards in a win over Houston.

T.J. VASHER, WR The junior receiver is set to emerge as the No. 1 threat on the outside for the Raiders.

JORDYN BROOKS, LB Brooks will be the leader on the defense and will continue a strong lineage of linebackers in recent years for the Red Raiders.

KEY LOSSES

DAKOTA ALLEN, LB Allen's leadership and comeback story were fuel for the defensive unit a year ago.

CLAYTON HATFIELD, PK It's a position that can be overlooked, but Hatfield provided a total of 106 points last season.

ANTOINE WESLEY, WR Sparked the Tech offense with a breakout season that was highlighted by 1,410 receiving yards and nine TDs.

RISING STAR

Running back **SARODORICK THOMPSON** provides another complete back option for Texas Tech behind Ta'Zhawn Henry. His power and quickness balance out to give him the ability to run between tackles, establish the edge and be a threat in the passing game.

Texas Tech moved on from Kliff Kingsbury — after the team's fourth losing season in five years — and brought in former Utah State head coach Matt Wells to take the reins. Wells took the Aggies to five bowl games during his six seasons and departed as the second-winningest coach in program history.

Wells inherits a Texas Tech team that was not far from having a very successful season. Tech dropped three games by eight points or fewer — two of those losses coming from the eventual duo that played in the Big 12 Championship Game, Texas and Oklahoma.

Wells has the opportunity to turn this group into a unit that can close out games. It all starts with his sophomore quarterback from Grapevine, Texas.

OFFENSE Texas Tech's passing attack is one that stands the test of time. The Air Raid remains in place with David Yost as offensive coordinator. Yost will work with quarterback Alan Bowman, the young standout whom Yost calls a "football junkie." Bowman, who missed four games because of an injured lung, posted a completion percentage of 69.4, the best by a Red Raider since 2012. Wells and Co. will work this season with a healthy Bowman, who showed he could compete against the Big 12 by amassing 2,638 yards and 17 touchdowns through the air.

Texas Tech will lean on veteran targets such as Seth Collins and T.J. Vasher this season. Both are battling with injuries that should clear up by the time the fall rolls around. Vasher brings his wingspan and height to the outside receiver position. His seven TD catches in 2018 were second on the team. Vasher served as the second primary target through his 11-game season, finishing with 54 receptions for 687 yards.

Running back Ta'Zhawn Henry and receiver KeSean Carter are two sophomores who can benefit from a season of experience and some time to learn Yost's system. Carter, a two-sport athlete who also runs track, showcased his speed on the indoor track with a personal record of 6.71 in the 60-meter dash.

The offensive line will return four veteran pieces — tackles Terence Steele and Travis Bruffy and guards Madison Akamnonu and Jack Anderson. Wells has adjusted the front five by switching Steele and Bruffy. Steele will work at left tackle after 27 consecutive starts at right tackle, while Bruffy will move to the right after starting 22 games at left tackle over the past couple of years. This unit's depth is still one of the strong points of the offense. Wells wants to have at least eight or nine players available in the rotation in case of injuries and unexpected situations.

DEFENSE Defensive coordinator Keith Patterson comes in working with a defense that allowed an average of 448.9 yards per game last season. Turnovers will be emphasized once again after the Red Raiders posted 2.2 takeaways per game in 2017 but only 1.5 last year.

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	Montana State
Sept.	7	UTEP
Sept.	14	at Arizona
Sept.	28	at Oklahoma
Oct.	5	Oklahoma State
Oct.	12	at Baylor
Oct.	19	Iowa State
Oct.	26	at Kansas
Nov.	9	at West Virginia
Nov.	16	TCU
Nov.	23	Kansas State
Nov.	29	at Texas

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 5-7, 3-6 BIG 12

Sept.	1	vs. Ole Miss #	L	27-47
Sept.	8	Lamar	W	77-0
Sept.	15	Houston	W	63-49
Sept.	22	at Oklahoma State	W	41-17
Sept.	29	West Virginia	L	34-42
Oct.	11	at TCU	W	17-14
Oct.	20	Kansas	W	48-16
Oct.	27	at Iowa State	L	31-40
Nov.	3	Oklahoma	L	46-51
Nov.	10	Texas	L	34-41
Nov.	17	at Kansas State	L	6-21
Nov.	24	vs. Baylor %	L	24-35

#Houston %Arlington

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	BIG 12	NATIONAL
Scoring	37.3 ppg	4	16
Rushing	132.6 ypg	9	109
Passing	352.6 ypg	1	3
Total	485.2 ypg	4	12
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**BIG 12**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	31.1 ppg	7	86
Rushing	160.6 ypg	7	61
Passing	288.3 ypg	9	129
Total	448.9 ypg	8	108
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**BIG 12**	**NATIONAL**
-4	-0.33	7	91

2019 RECRUITS

1. Gilbert Ibeneme, DE, Pearland, TX
2. Alante Brown, WR, Chicago, IL
3. Trevor Roberson, OT, Wellington, TX
4. Travis Koontz, TE, Austintown, OH*
5. Landon Peterson, OT, Odessa, TX
6. Maverick McIvor, QB, San Angelo, TX
7. Alex Hogan, CB, Houston, TX
8. Simon Gonzalez, TE, Magnolia, TX
9. Tyrique Matthews, LB, Houston, TX
10. Trey Cleveland, WR, Arlington, TX
11. Tony Bradford, DE, Houston, TX
12. Bryce Robinson, LB, Sachse, TX
13. Austin McNamara, P, Gilbert, AZ
14. Cameron Cantrell, WR, Whitehouse, TX
15. Quinton, Williams, DE, Houston, TX
16. Cole Thomas, OT, Seattle, WA
17. Dadrion Taylor, DB, Oklahoma City, OK
18. Jonathan Garibay, K, Rubidoux, CA*

*junior college transfer

Recruits ranked according to the 247SportsComposite

Tim Umphrey

ADVANCED STATS

5 Factors: College Football's Most Important Stats

Field Position[1]		Rank
Offense	29.4	81
Defense	29.0	60
Margin	+0.4	67

Efficiency[2]		Rank
Offense	47.9%	14
Defense	43.0%	84
Margin	+4.9%	35

Explosiveness[3]		Rank
Offense	6.0	50
Defense	6.0	91
Margin	+0.0	76

Finishing Drives[4]		Rank
Offense	5.0	25
Defense	4.5	64
Margin	+0.5	37

Adjusted TO Margin[5]		Rank
Projected	3.0	45
Actual	-4	89
Margin	-7.0	121

KEY: **1**-Average starting field position by yard line; **2**-Rate of successful plays (gaining 50% of necessary yards on 1st down, 70% on 2nd down, 100% on 3rd down); **3**-Explosiveness=yards per play; **4**-Points per trip inside 40-yard line; **5**-TO margin accounting for "luck" • Advanced stats provided by Bill Connelly of SB Nation

NUMBERS TO KNOW

9

Matt Wells comes to Lubbock having overcome some close-game demons. His Utah State Aggies suffered a nine-game losing streak in one-possession finishes before finally winning a couple in 2018.

+4.9

Tech's offense enjoyed a 47.9 percent success rate (percentage of plays that gained at least 50 percent of necessary yardage on first down, 70 percent on second, or 100 percent on third or fourth), and the defense allowed 43 percent. This plus-4.9 percent margin was second in the conference to Oklahoma's.

-7

Based on national averages for fumble recovery rates and the ratio of interceptions to passes broken up, Tech's turnover margin should have been about plus-3. Instead, it was minus-4, a seven-turnover difference.

The middle of the defensive unit for Texas Tech will have to replace Dakota Allen, a key piece who totaled 262 total tackles in his three years in Lubbock. Red Raider fans, however, don't have to look far for new leaders at the position with Jordyn Brooks and Riko Jeffers stepping into the spotlight. The two combined for 144 takedowns last season.

A defensive front with Eli Howard and Broderick Washington will provide experience in a scheme that will utilize a lot of different coverages with the ability to apply pressure on opposing teams if needed. Patterson's recent success in his lone season at Utah State shows in the turnover margin. The Aggies tied for the FBS lead with 32 turnovers forced a year ago — and their 22 interceptions should have Texas Tech players such as Adrian Frye, Jaylon Lane and Justus Parker licking their chops that Patterson's game plan will give them plenty of ball-hawking opportunities.

SPECIALISTS Wells is expecting to bring in more kickers and punters later in the offseason. Right now, Trey Wolff has emerged as a possible replacement for Clayton Hatfield, who did not miss an extra point last season and finished 7-of-7 on field goals from 40 yards or longer. Questions remain about Wolff's consistency and lack of experience, though. Cody Waddell will be competing for punting duties with Austin McNamara, the third-ranked punter in the 2019 recruiting class. McNamara averaged 42.6 yards per punt in his senior year at Gilbert (Ariz.) Highland and put 12 punts inside the 20-yard line.

FINAL ANALYSIS Learning a new language is weighing on this offense, which will at times rely on new faces and young players, especially at receiver.

Defensively, Patterson has some wiggle room to be coverage heavy with some depth in the secondary. The ability to play with blitz packages featuring a new hybrid Raider position, which Lonzell Gilmore will fill, should allow the Red Raiders to improve on a mid-50s ranking in sacks.

In order for the Raiders to have a successful season, Wells will need to trust in Bowman's and Yost's partnership to produce points. The defense will need to find a way to increase pressure on the quarterback, which will lead to turnovers and more three-and-outs against fast-paced Big 12 offenses.

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (6)

WR	9	**T.J. Vasher (Jr.)**	83	Myller Royals (Fr.)
WR	82	KeSean Carter (So.)	84	Erik Ezukanma (Fr.)
WR	22	Seth Collins (Sr.)	13	McLane Mannix (Jr.)
LT	78	**Terence Steele (Sr.)**	75	Giovanni Pancotti (Jr.)
LG	58	**Madison Akamnonu (Sr.)**	73	Dawson Deaton (So.)
C	71	Bailey Smith (Sr.)	74	Will Farrar (So.)
RG	56	**Jack Anderson (Jr.)**	70	Weston Wright (Fr.)
RT	79	**Travis Bruffy (Sr.)**	65	Zach Adams (Jr.)
TE	11	Donta Thompson (Sr.)		Travis Koontz (Jr.)
QB	10	**Alan Bowman (So.)**	7	Jett Duffey (Jr.)
RB	26	Ta'Zhawn Henry (So.)	28	SaRodorick Thompson (Fr.)

DEFENSE (5)

Returning Starters in Bold

DE	53	**Eli Howard (Jr.)**	91	Nelson Mbanasor (So.)
DT	96	**Broderick Washington (Sr.)**	98	Nick McCann (Jr.)
DE	90	Quentin Yontz (Sr.)	92	Noah Jones (Jr.)
OLB	94	Lonzell Gilmore (Sr.)	45	Aaron Calcote (So.)
ILB	1	**Jordyn Brooks (Sr.)**	33	Brayden Stringer (Jr.)
ILB	6	Riko Jeffers (Jr.)	37	Xavier Benson (Fr.)
CB	20	Adrian Frye (So.)	23	**Damarcus Fields (Jr.)**
CB	4	**Desmon Smith (Sr.)**	3	Douglas Coleman III (Sr.)
CB	31	Justus Parker (Sr.)	24	Adam Beck (So.)
S	12	Quincy Addison (So.)	32	Jake Kirkpatrick (Fr.)
S	16	Thomas Leggett (Jr.)	27	Adrien Cross (Jr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	36	Trey Wolff (Fr.)	KR	82	KeSean Carter (So.)
P		Austin McNamara (Fr.)	PR	20	Adrian Frye (So.)

2018 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Alan Bowman	**327**	**227**	**2,638**	**17**	**7**
Jett Duffey	**154**	**104**	**1,221**	**8**	**6**
McLane Carter	**51**	**28**	**318**	**2**	**2**

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD
Jett Duffey	**79**	**369**	**4.7**	**4**
Da'Leon Ward	**79**	**341**	**4.3**	**3**
Ta'Zhawn Henry	**86**	**341**	**4.0**	**8**

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Antoine Wesley	88	1,410	16.0	9
Ja'Deion High	62	804	13.0	4
T.J. Vasher	**54**	**687**	**12.7**	**7**
Seth Collins	**32**	**317**	**9.9**	**2**

KICKING: Clayton Hatfield, 17-19 FGs; 106 pts.

TACKLES: **Jordyn Brooks, 84;** Dakota Allen, 73

SACKS: Kolin Hill, 5.0

INTERCEPTIONS: **Adrian Frye, 5**

Returning Players in **Bold**

SCOUTING THE RED RAIDERS

OPPOSING COACHES SIZE UP TEXAS TECH

"Of the four schools in the conference changing staffs, this is definitely the best situation to step into. There's talent on the roster, and they were close last year. I think the message and the relationship with the team Kliff (Kingsbury) had faded out a little bit. If Alan Bowman stays healthy he can be a pretty good quarterback, although he may not fit exactly what (Matt) Wells and (offensive coordinator David) Yost are looking for at the position. … They're going to score just as many points after a while, but you'll see them do a lot more with the run game. More creative stuff, but that will take a while. Matt's smart, he's not going to force his scheme. … They're going to be fine on defense this year, believe it or not. Statistically they beat up on (former DC) David Gibbs and those guys, but there's not much you can do when you're seeing that many possessions. They're going to coach offense in a friendlier way for that defense, but that defense wasn't awful. They have two really good linebackers, Jordyn Brooks and Riko Jeffers, and a good returning line. … I think they can be successful this year if they can find a way to balance out their offense closer to what Matt did at Utah State. That's gonna be hard for a team that liked to hit around 100 rushing a game for years, so they're gonna need to get creative until they can reshape their recruiting."

West Virginia **Mountaineers**

National Forecast: **58** • Big 12 Prediction: **7** • Projected Record: **6-6, 4-5 Big 12**

Marcus Simms

Historically, WVU spring football exhibitions haven't been a big deal in Morgantown. But that changed this past April 13. Yes, the Mountaineers — loaded offensively in 2018 — are coming off a "disappointing" 8–4 season. Yes, the stars from that offense — Will Grier, David Sills V, Gary Jennings and Yodny Cajuste — are gone. Even head coach Dana Holgorsen took a powder for Houston, a Group of 5 job. Yet when the team ran onto Mountaineer Field for the spring game, 18,865 fans were there to cheer — the third-highest number ever for a WVU spring game. And the reason is the fans' warm welcome for new coach Neal Brown.

Brown's family-first approach is playing well in the Mountain State. It's playing well within the team confines. Now the question is: Can West Virginia play well within the Big 12?

Brown has a proven track record, winning 10 games in three consecutive seasons at Troy. He's hoping Oklahoma transfer Austin Kendall can fill Grier's shoes. He's hoping the question marks on the offensive line are answered. And he's hoping defensive coordinator Vic Koenning can fix the ills of Mountaineer defenses past.

OFFENSE The good news for the Mountaineers' new "get-it-done" offense is that they are stacked with quality running backs. Brown can go with either senior: versatile Kennedy McKoy or powerful Martell Pettaway. He can go with strong sophomore Leddie Brown. Or he can go with elusive 5'9" redshirt sophomore Alec Sinkfield.

The problem is that the offensive line in front of them has major holes to fill. Gone is left tackle Cajuste, although WVU coaches are confident Colton McKivitz can handle the job after moving from the right side. They can also rest easy over the right guard position. Junior Josh Sills has started 22 games there and was a second-team All-Big 12 pick. In the spring, ex-guard Chase Behrndt was giving center a whirl for the first time. Projected right tackle Kelby Wickline sat out the Gold-Blue game with an injury. And senior Michael Brown would be starting for the first time at left guard.

Also in the spring, Kendall, who sat behind Heisman winners Baker Mayfield and Kyler Murray at OU, failed to separate himself from Miami (Fla.) transfer Jack Allison in the quarterback battle. Insiders call it a "coin flip."

As for receivers, Alabama transfer T.J. Simmons has proven to be a leader; redshirt freshman Sam James seems set to burst onto the scene; and Marcus Simms, who was out in the spring with "personal issues," should be a lethal deep threat.

DEFENSE Gone is the 3-3-5 odd stack of the Holgorsen days. In its place is more of a 4-2 look with hybrid players moving and disguising.

So far so good for the Mountaineers — through spring anyway. The defense proved to be ahead of the offense.

Up front, Brown's staff brought in junior college end Taijh Alston, who initially attended East Carolina. "We recruited him early at Troy," says line coach Jordan Les-

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Neal Brown
Record at School: First Season
Career Record: 35-16 (4 years)
Offensive Coordinators: Matt Moore, Chad Scott
Defensive Coordinator: Vic Koenning
Location: Morgantown, WV
Stadium: Milan Puskar Stadium (60,000)

KEY MOUNTAINEERS

COLTON MCKIVITZ, OT The fifth-year senior is moving to left tackle after starting 35 career games, mostly at right tackle.

JOSH SILLS, OG A 6'6" junior, Sills has started 22 games over the past two years and was a second-team All-Big 12 pick last season.

KENNY ROBINSON JR., FS Robinson is the leading returning tackler from 2018 with 77 and had a team-high four interceptions.

KEY LOSSES

WILL GRIER, QB The fourth-place finisher in the Heisman voting, Grier completed more than 500 passes for 7,354 yards and 71 TDs for WVU.

DAVID SILLS V, WR Sills earned All-America honors in his last two seasons and had 132 catches for 2,097 yards and 35 touchdowns.

DAVID LONG JR., LB Long was the Big 12 Defensive Player of the Year and tied the school single-season record with 19 tackles for a loss in 2018.

RISING STAR

Fans became aware of receiver **SAM JAMES** when he was on the ESPN "You Got Mossed" feature, courtesy of Mountain State native Randy Moss. James was the 6-A 400-meter sprint champ in his home state of Georgia. In WVU's spring game, he had four catches for 85 yards.

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	James Madison
Sept.	7	at Missouri
Sept.	14	NC State
Sept.	21	at Kansas
Oct.	5	Texas
Oct.	12	Iowa State
Oct.	19	at Oklahoma
Oct.	31	at Baylor
Nov.	9	Texas Tech
Nov.	16	at Kansas State
Nov.	23	Oklahoma State
Nov.	30	at TCU

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 8-4, 6-3 BIG 12

Sept.	1	vs. Tennessee #	W	40-14
Sept.	8	Youngstown State	W	52-17
Sept.	22	Kansas State	W	35-6
Sept.	29	at Texas Tech	W	42-34
Oct.	6	Kansas	W	38-22
Oct.	13	at Iowa State	L	14-30
Oct.	25	Baylor	W	58-14
Nov.	3	at Texas	W	42-41
Nov.	10	TCU	W	47-10
Nov.	17	at Oklahoma State	L	41-45
Nov.	23	Oklahoma	L	56-59
Dec.	28	vs. Syracuse %	L	18-34

#Charlotte %Camping World Bowl

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	BIG 12	NATIONAL
Scoring	40.3 ppg	2	10
Rushing	160.9 ypg	5	76
Passing	351.3 ypg	2	4
Total	512.3 ypg	2	8
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**BIG 12**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	27.2 ppg	5	67
Rushing	147.7 ypg	4	48
Passing	259.0 ypg	6	106
Total	406.7 ypg	5	74
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**BIG 12**	**NATIONAL**
+7	+0.58	3	23

2019 RECRUITS

1. Osita Smith, S, Columbia, MD
2. Dreshun Miller, CB, Kennesaw, GA*
3. Tykee Smith, S, Philadelphia, PA
4. Parker Moorer, OT, Charlotte, NC
5. Winston Wright, WR, Pooler, GA
6. Taijh Alston, DE, Carthage, NC*
7. Donavan Beaver, OT, Fredericksburg, VA
8. Jalen Thornton, DE, Cincinnati, OH
9. Tony Mathis, RB, Cedartown, GA
10. Tavian Mayo, CB, Leesburg, GA
11. Nicktroy Fortune, CB, Roswell, GA
12. Brandon Yates, OT, Middletown, DE
13. Terence Doston, WR, Tampa, FL
14. Kerry Martin, S, Charleston, WV
15. Ali Jennings, WR, Richmond, VA
16. Tacorey Turner, CB, Montgomery, AL
17. Rashean Lynn, S, Mims, FL
18. Jared Bartlett, LB, Suwanee, GA
19. Kolton McGhee, K, Altoona, PA
20. Jordan Jefferson, DT, Navarre, FL

*junior college transfer

Recruits ranked according to the 247SportsComposite

Bruce Schwartzman

ADVANCED STATS

5 Factors: College Football's Most Important Stats

Field Position[1]		Rank
Offense	31.9	19
Defense	27.5	22
Margin	**+4.4**	**18**

Efficiency[2]		Rank
Offense	47.8%	15
Defense	45.5%	104
Margin	**+2.3%**	**51**

Explosiveness[3]		Rank
Offense	7.1	6
Defense	5.8	76
Margin	**+1.3**	**17**

Finishing Drives[4]		Rank
Offense	4.8	39
Defense	5.1	109
Margin	**-0.3**	**85**

Adjusted TO Margin[5]		Rank
Projected	6.0	18
Actual	7	23
Margin	**+1.0**	**50**

KEY: 1-Average starting field position by yard line; **2**-Rate of successful plays (gaining 50% of necessary yards on 1st down, 70% on 2nd down, 100% on 3rd down); **3**-Explosiveness=yards per play; **4**-Points per trip inside 40-yard line; **5**-TO margin accounting for "luck" • Advanced stats provided by Bill Connelly of SB Nation

NUMBERS TO KNOW

+4.4

No one in the Big 12 tilted the field like WVU: The Mountaineers enjoyed a field position advantage of 4.4 yards per drive — 31.9 on offense (19th in FBS), 27.5 on defense (22nd) — which was easily first in the conference and 18th overall.

74

In two seasons with Will Grier as starter, WVU enjoyed 74 passes of 30-plus yards. Only Oklahoma and Ole Miss had more in that span of time.

45.5

Defense held WVU back in 2018. The Mountaineers allowed a success rate (percentage of plays that gained at least 50 percent of necessary yardage on first down, 70 percent on second, or 100 percent on third or fourth) of 45.5 percent, 104th in FBS. Troy's, for what it's worth: 39.6 percent, 44th.

ley. "Then he started getting some bigger offers. Long kid. Has a lot of natural tools."

At nose guard and tackle, WVU might feature a pair of brothers in junior Darius and sophomore Dante Stills, whose father Gary played nine years in the NFL. Senior Reese Donahue also returns at tackle.

At Bandit, WVU lost former five-star recruit Brendan Ferns to injury, but Alabama transfer VanDarius Cowan could be the solution. If not, Zach Sandwisch and Exree Loe were making plays in the spring. At the Mike, Dylan Tonkery is expected to be at full speed after an injury.

Mountaineer coaches love weak-side linebacker Josh Chandler. The Spear or nickel outside linebacker should be JoVanni Stewart, who was fourth on the team in tackles last year. Hakeem Bailey, Keith Washington Jr. and Josh Norwood will man the corner positions, and Kenny Robinson Jr. will have to lead at free safety.

SPECIALISTS Brown said heading into spring drills that the biggest special teams question was punting after Billy Kinney's departure. In the spring game, placekicker Evan Staley and redshirt freshman Casey Legg were both punting. Otherwise, WVU should be in fine shape. Simms returned kicks and punts last season. Staley, a junior, hit 16-of-20 field goal attempts, including his last 12. Even long snapper Rex Sunahara, whose father Reed is WVU's volleyball coach, returns.

FINAL ANALYSIS The general feeling around the West Virginia program is that Holgorsen fled because the cupboard was bare.

That said, don't underestimate the way the Mountaineer fan base has embraced Brown nor the way the team has responded to him.

Brown provided the program a big boost by wrangling Kendall away from Oklahoma coach Lincoln Riley. He welcomed Cowan into spring camp. He added junior college transfers Alston, a defensive lineman, and Dreshun Miller, a defensive back. The question is: Will the additions be enough?

Early on this season, keep an eye on WVU's offensive line and young receiving corps. Also, check to see how the Mountaineer defenders adapt to the new scheme. The answers to those questions will help shape Brown's Year 1 in Morgantown.

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (4)

WR	1	T.J. Simmons (Jr.)	36	Ricky Johns (So.)
WR	**8**	**Marcus Simms (Sr.)**	81	Sam James (Fr.)
WR	14	Tevin Bush (Jr.)	27	Kwincy Hall (Fr.)
LT	**53**	**Colton McKivitz (Sr.)**	71	Junior Uzebu (Fr.)
LG	57	Michael Brown (Jr.)	62	Zach Davis (Jr.)
C	76	Chase Behrndt (Jr.)	78	Jacob Buccigrossi (Jr.)
RG	**73**	**Josh Sills (Jr.)**	68	Briason Mays (Fr.)
RT	72	Kelby Wickline (Sr.)	70	Tyler Thurmond (So.)
TE	84	Jovani Haskins (Jr.)	85	T.J. Banks (Fr.)
QB	10	Austin Kendall (Jr.)	11	Jack Allison (Jr.)
RB	**6**	**Kennedy McKoy (Sr.)**	32	Martell Pettaway (Sr.)

DEFENSE (5)

Returning Starters in Bold

DE	12	Taijh Alston (Jr.)	13	Jeffery Pooler Jr. (Jr.)
NG	56	Darius Stills (Jr.)	90	Brenon Thrift (Sr.)
DT	**46**	**Reese Donahue (Sr.)**	55	Dante Stills (So.)
BAN	32	VanDarius Cowan (So.)	31	Zach Sandwisch (Jr.)
WLB	35	Josh Chandler (So.)	26	Deamonte Lindsay (Sr.)
MLB	10	Dylan Tonkery (Jr.)	51	Jake Abbott (So.)
CB	24	Hakeem Bailey (Sr.)	23	Jordan Adams (Sr.)
CB	**4**	**Josh Norwood (Sr.)**	**28**	**Keith Washington Jr. (Sr.)**
NB	**9**	**JoVanni Stewart (Sr.)**	39	Dante Bonamico (Jr.)
FS	**2**	**Kenny Robinson Jr. (Jr.)**	29	Sean Mahone (Jr.)
CAT	1	Derek Pitts Jr. (Jr.)	22	Jake Long (Jr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	30	Evan Staley (Jr.)	**KR**	8	Marcus Simms (Sr.)
P	30	Evan Staley (Jr.)	**PR**	8	Marcus Simms (Sr.)

2018 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Will Grier	397	266	3,864	37	8
Jack Allison	**45**	**23**	**352**	**1**	**2**

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD
Kennedy McKoy	**145**	**802**	**5.5**	**8**
Martell Pettaway	**98**	**623**	**6.4**	**6**
Leddie Brown	**91**	**446**	**4.9**	**4**
Tevin Bush	**6**	**103**	**17.2**	**0**

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
David Sills V	65	986	15.2	15
Gary Jennings	54	917	17.0	13
Marcus Simms	**46**	**699**	**15.2**	**2**
T.J. Simmons	**28**	**341**	**12.2**	**1**

KICKING: Evan Staley, 16-20 FGs, 107 pts.

TACKLES: David Long Jr., 111; **Kenny Robinson Jr., 77**

SACKS: David Long Jr., 7.0

INTERCEPTIONS: Kenny Robinson Jr., 4

Returning Players in **Bold**

SCOUTING THE MOUNTAINEERS

OPPOSING COACHES SIZE UP WEST VIRGINIA

"Neal (Brown) obviously did a great job at Troy, but this is a completely different kind of challenge. It's also a roster in transition, and they have a brutal schedule for a while because of the nonconference opponents they're lining up. The immediate challenge is that Will Grier and David Sills are gone. That's a lot of playmaking you have to replace. … One thing that you might see this year is them running the ball a lot. Neal did that at Troy and got away from the Air Raid when they had to. Dana Holgorsen's teams ran the ball really well. This is a big, athletic offensive line. … Same deal on defense with their star guys. David Long was a Defensive Player of the Year-level talent. It felt like he was making every other tackle out there. They don't have anyone of that caliber to replace him. … What kind of defensive scheme will they run this season? You've got a roster built for a 3-3 stack, so (defensive coordinator) Vic (Koenning) will have to adjust and adapt what they can actually run this year. … They've always recruited well for what they want to do. They shouldn't be as good as they've been at the skill positions. The biggest thing the new staff needs to do is get out and find really good receivers and running backs right away, and it won't be locally. You gotta go win Florida and Texas to keep West Virginia relevant."

BIG TEN *Preview*

East			West		
		Predicted Order of Finish			
1	*Michigan* **WOLVERINES** 12-1, 8-1 Big Ten		1	*Nebraska* **CORNHUSKERS** 9-4, 6-3 Big Ten	
2	*Ohio State* **BUCKEYES** 11-1, 8-1 Big Ten		2	*Iowa* **HAWKEYES** 9-3, 6-3 Big Ten	
3	*Penn State* **NITTANY LIONS** 9-3, 6-3 Big Ten		3	*Wisconsin* **BADGERS** 8-4, 5-4 Big Ten	
4	*Michigan State* **SPARTANS** 8-4, 5-4 Big Ten		4	*Northwestern* **WILDCATS** 7-5, 5-4 Big Ten	
5	*Maryland* **TERRAPINS** 5-7, 3-6 Big Ten		5	*Minnesota* **GOLDEN GOPHERS** 7-5, 4-5 Big Ten	
6	*Indiana* **HOOSIERS** 5-7, 2-7 Big Ten		6	*Purdue* **BOILERMAKERS** 6-6, 4-5 Big Ten	
7	*Rutgers* **SCARLET KNIGHTS** 2-10, 0-9 Big Ten		7	*Illinois* **FIGHTING ILLINI** 4-8, 1-8 Big Ten	

Big Ten Championship: **Michigan over Nebraska**

Games to Watch

SEPT. 21
MICHIGAN AT WISCONSIN
Jim Harbaugh could use a fast start to the Big Ten season. It won't be easy; the Wolverines have lost four straight in Madison.

SEPT. 27
PENN STATE AT MARYLAND
The Terps host Penn State for a Friday night clash. The game won't be as fierce as the James Franklin vs. Mike Locksley battles on the recruiting trail.

SEPT. 28
OHIO STATE AT NEBRASKA
We are predicting one of these teams will play in the Big Ten Championship Game. Hint: It's not the team you think (see above).

OCT. 5
IOWA AT MICHIGAN
If Iowa wins the Big Ten West, the Hawkeyes will have to get it done on the road. They play at Michigan, Wisconsin, Northwestern and Nebraska.

OCT. 19
MICHIGAN AT PENN STATE
The home team has won three straight in this series — by scores of 49–10 (Michigan in 2016), 42–13 (PSU in '17) and 42–7 (Michigan in '18).

OCT. 26
NOTRE DAME AT MICHIGAN
Notre Dame visits the Big House for the first time since 2013. The Wolverines won that day, 41–30, but have dropped the last two to the Irish.

Parsons: Joe Robbins; Hill: Bruce Schwartzman

2019 Unit Rankings

	QB	RB	WR/TE	OL	DL	LB	DB
ILLINOIS	14	5	13	7	11	12	14
INDIANA	9	8	7	12	12	14	10
IOWA	4	6	10	2	5	9	3
MARYLAND	8	7	11	10	14	11	12
MICHIGAN	1	10	1	1	4	4	4
MICHIGAN STATE	5	13	5	9	2	2	5
MINNESOTA	12	4	4	8	9	7	9
NEBRASKA	3	9	9	6	8	10	6
NORTHWESTERN	10	12	12	14	6	3	8
OHIO STATE	2	2	2	4	1	6	1
PENN STATE	6	3	6	5	3	1	2
PURDUE	7	14	3	11	7	5	11
RUTGERS	13	11	14	13	13	13	13
WISCONSIN	11	1	8	3	10	8	7

Recruiting by School

1. Michigan
2. Penn State
3. Ohio State
4. Nebraska
5. Purdue
6. Wisconsin
7. Michigan State
8. Indiana
9. Iowa
10. Minnesota
11. Maryland
12. Northwestern
13. Illinois
14. Rutgers

Lavert Hill, Michigan

Micah Parsons, Penn State

2019 Bowl Projections

Peach Bowl (CFB): Michigan vs. Alabama
Rose Bowl: Ohio State vs. Washington
Outback Bowl: Penn State vs. Auburn
Pinstripe Bowl: Michigan State vs. NC State
Citrus Bowl: Nebraska vs. Texas A&M
Holiday Bowl: Iowa vs. Utah
TaxSlayer Bowl: Wisconsin vs. South Carolina
Quick Lane Bowl: Northwestern vs. Wake Forest
Redbox Bowl: Minnesota vs. Washington State
Armed Forces Bowl: Purdue vs. Air Force

Big Ten Coordinator Carousel

Illinois: Defense
New: Lovie Smith
Old: Hardy Nickerson

Indiana: Offense
New: Kalen DeBoer
Old: Mike DeBord

Indiana: Defense
New: Mark Hagen, Kane Wommack
Old: Mark Hagen

Maryland: Offense
New: Scottie Montgomery, Joker Phillips
Old: Matt Canada

Maryland: Defense
New: Jon Hoke
Old: Jimmy Brumbaugh, Andy Buh

Michigan: Offense
New: Josh Gattis
Old: Jim Harbaugh, Pep Hamilton

Michigan State: Offense
New: Brad Salem
Old: Jim Bollman, Dave Warner

Minnesota: Defense
New: Joe Rossi
Old: Robb Smith

Ohio State: Offense
New: Kevin Wilson
Old: Ryan Day, Kevin Wilson

Ohio State: Defense
New: Jeff Hafley, Greg Mattison
Old: Alex Grinch, Greg Schiano

Rutgers: Defense
New: Andy Buh, Noah Joseph
Old: Noah Joseph, Jay Niemann

OCT. 26
PENN STATE AT MICHIGAN STATE
Penn State has lost two straight to the Spartans despite being ranked No. 7 in 2017 and No. 8 in 2018. This does not sit well with the folks in Happy Valley.

NOV. 16
WISCONSIN AT NEBRASKA
UW's 70–31 win over Nebraska in the 2012 Big Ten title game (remember Legends and Leaders?) was the first of six straight for the Badgers in the series.

NOV. 16
MICHIGAN STATE AT MICHIGAN
Momentum is swinging back to Michigan in this in-state battle, but the Spartans have won four of the last five in Ann Arbor.

NOV. 23
PENN STATE AT OHIO STATE
Ohio State has rallied from double-digit deficits in the fourth quarter to beat Penn State in each of the last two seasons.

NOV. 29
IOWA AT NEBRASKA
These two programs have each made one appearance in the Big Ten Championship Game. The winner of this game could be headed to Indy.

NOV. 30
OHIO STATE AT MICHIGAN
The Buckeyes extended their winning streak against Michigan to seven with a breathtaking offensive display (567 yards) last November in Columbus.

Adrian Martinez, Nebraska

Big Ten Returning Leaders

Passing	ATT	COMP	PCT	YDS	TD	INT	AVG/G
Peyton Ramsey, Indiana	447	295	66.0	2,875	19	13	239.6
Adrian Martinez, Nebraska	347	224	64.6	2,617	17	8	237.9
Nate Stanley, Iowa	396	235	59.3	2,852	26	10	219.4

Rushing	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD	LONG	AVG/G
Jonathan Taylor, Wisconsin	307	2,194	7.2	16	88	168.8
Mohamed Ibrahim, Minnesota	202	1,160	5.7	9	74	116.0
Stevie Scott, Indiana	228	1,137	5.0	10	45	94.8

Receiving	REC	YDS	AVG	TD	LONG	AVG/G
Rondale Moore, Purdue	114	1,258	11.0	12	70	96.8
Tyler Johnson, Minnesota	78	1,169	15.0	12	52	89.9
JD Spielman, Nebraska	66	818	12.4	8	75	81.8

Tackles: Blake Gallagher, Northwestern (127), Paddy Fisher, Northwestern (117)
Sacks: A.J. Epenesa, Iowa (10.5), Chase Young, Ohio State (9.5), Carter Coughlin, Minnesota (9.5)
Interceptions: Geno Stone, Iowa (4), JR Pace, Northwestern (4)

2018 Big Ten Standings

EAST	BIG TEN	OVERALL	WEST	BIG TEN	OVERALL
Ohio State	8-1	13-1	Northwestern	8-1	9-5
Michigan	8-1	10-3	Wisconsin	5-4	8-5
Penn State	6-3	9-4	Purdue	5-4	6-7
Michigan State	5-4	7-6	Iowa	5-4	9-4
Maryland	3-6	5-7	Minnesota	3-6	7-6
Indiana	2-7	5-7	Nebraska	3-6	4-8
Rutgers	0-9	1-11	Illinois	2-7	4-8

2018 Bowl Results

Quick Lane Bowl: Minnesota 34, Georgia Tech 10
Pinstripe Bowl: Wisconsin 35, Miami (Fla.) 3
Redbox Bowl: Oregon 7, Michigan State 6
Music City Bowl: Auburn 63, Purdue 14
Holiday Bowl: Northwestern 31, Utah 20
Outback Bowl: Iowa 27, Mississippi State 22
Citrus Bowl: Kentucky 27, Penn State 24
Peach Bowl: Florida 41, Michigan 15
Rose Bowl: Ohio State 28, Washington 23

2018 Big Ten Team Stats & Rankings

Offense

	SCORING	RUSH	PASS	TOTAL
Illinois	26.0 (11)	243.0 (2)	165.7 (11)	408.7 (8)
Indiana	26.4 (10)	157.3 (9)	257.8 (3)	415.2 (7)
Iowa	31.2 (4)	148.4 (10)	226.6 (6)	375.0 (10)
Maryland	28.5 (9)	230.2 (3)	141.3 (13)	371.4 (11)
Michigan	35.2 (2)	203.8 (6)	215.7 (9)	419.5 (6)
Michigan State	18.7 (13)	124.9 (13)	217.2 (8)	342.1 (13)
Minnesota	28.9 (8)	170.9 (8)	208.8 (10)	379.6 (9)
Nebraska	30.0 (6)	209.0 (4)	247.2 (4)	456.2 (2)
Northwestern	24.2 (12)	114.9 (14)	239.4 (5)	354.4 (12)
Ohio State	42.4 (1)	171.3 (7)	364.3 (1)	535.6 (1)
Penn State	33.8 (3)	204.9 (5)	218.1 (7)	423.0 (5)
Purdue	30.5 (5)	136.4 (11)	307.5 (2)	443.9 (3)
Rutgers	13.5 (14)	134.1 (12)	132.2 (14)	266.3 (14)
Wisconsin	29.7 (7)	273.4 (1)	157.7 (12)	431.1 (4)

Defense

	SCORING	RUSH	PASS	TOTAL
Illinois	39.4 (14)	245.3 (14)	263.1 (13)	508.3 (14)
Indiana	29.9 (10)	183.2 (10)	240.6 (10)	423.8 (11)
Iowa	17.8 (2)	109.5 (2)	184.1 (3)	293.6 (2)
Maryland	28.7 (9)	183.9 (11)	206.5 (6)	390.4 (7)
Michigan	19.4 (3)	127.4 (3)	147.8 (1)	275.2 (1)
Michigan State	17.2 (1)	77.9 (1)	225.2 (8)	303.2 (3)
Minnesota	26.5 (8)	173.4 (9)	212.4 (7)	385.8 (6)
Nebraska	31.3 (12)	195.8 (12)	237.8 (9)	433.5 (12)
Northwestern	23.2 (6)	129.6 (4)	261.2 (12)	390.9 (8)
Ohio State	25.5 (7)	158.2 (6)	245.2 (11)	403.4 (10)
Penn State	20.5 (4)	169.0 (8)	181.5 (2)	350.5 (5)
Purdue	30.0 (11)	167.9 (7)	284.7 (14)	452.6 (13)
Rutgers	31.4 (13)	214.8 (13)	186.7 (4)	401.5 (9)
Wisconsin	22.6 (5)	155.1 (5)	189.1 (5)	344.2 (4)

ALL-BIG TEN TEAM

First-Team Offense

QB	**Shea Patterson**	6-2	205	Sr.	Michigan
RB	**J.K. Dobbins**	5-10	217	Jr.	Ohio State
RB	**Jonathan Taylor**	5-11	219	Jr.	Wisconsin
AP	**Rondale Moore**	5-9	180	So.	Purdue
WR	**Tyler Johnson**	6-2	200	Sr.	Minnesota
WR	**Donovan Peoples-Jones**	6-2	208	Jr.	Michigan
TE	**Pat Freiermuth**	6-5	262	So.	Penn State
C	**Tyler Biadasz**	6-3	318	Jr.	Wisconsin
OL	**Ben Bredeson**	6-5	320	Sr.	Michigan
OL	**Alaric Jackson**	6-6	320	Jr.	Iowa
OL	**Thayer Munford**	6-6	310	Jr.	Ohio State
OL	**Cole Van Lanen**	6-5	300	Jr.	Wisconsin

J.K. Dobbins, Ohio State

Yetur Gross-Matos, Penn state

First-Team Defense

DL	**A.J. Epenesa**	6-6	280	Jr.	Iowa
DL	**Yetur Gross-Matos**	6-5	265	Jr.	Penn State
DL	**Kenny Willekes**	6-4	262	Sr.	Michigan State
DL	**Chase Young**	6-5	265	Jr.	Ohio State
LB	**Joe Bachie**	6-2	238	Sr.	Michigan State
LB	**Markus Bailey**	6-1	240	Sr.	Purdue
LB	**Paddy Fisher**	6-4	241	Jr.	Northwestern
CB	**Lavert Hill**	5-11	181	Sr.	Michigan
CB	**Josiah Scott**	5-10	168	Jr.	Michigan State
S	**Jordan Fuller**	6-2	205	Sr.	Ohio State
S	**Josh Metellus**	6-0	204	Sr.	Michigan

First-Team Specialists

K	**Matt Coghlin**	5-9	200	Jr.	Michigan State
P	**Drue Chrisman**	6-3	220	Jr.	Ohio State
KR	**Ihmir Smith-Marsette**	6-1	177	Jr.	Iowa
PR	**Donovan Peoples-Jones**	6-2	208	Jr.	Michigan

SECOND-TEAM OFFENSE

QB	**Justin Fields**	6-3	223	So.	Ohio State
RB	**Reggie Corbin**	5-10	200	Sr.	Illinois
RB	**Anthony McFarland Jr.**	5-8	193	So.	Maryland
AP	**Rodney Smith**	5-11	210	Sr.	Minnesota
WR	**K.J. Hill**	6-0	195	Sr.	Ohio State
WR	**JD Spielman**	5-9	185	Jr.	Nebraska
TE	**Brycen Hopkins**	6-5	245	Sr.	Purdue
C	**Cesar Ruiz**	6-4	319	Jr.	Michigan
OL	**Coy Cronk**	6-5	321	Sr.	Indiana
OL	**Jon Runyan**	6-5	310	Sr.	Michigan
OL	**Rashawn Slater**	6-3	314	Jr.	Northwestern
OL	**Tristan Wirfs**	6-5	320	Jr.	Iowa

SECOND-TEAM DEFENSE

DL	**Carter Coughlin**	6-4	245	Sr.	Minnesota
DL	**Joe Gaziano**	6-4	275	Sr.	Northwestern
DL	**Raequan Williams**	6-4	298	Sr.	Michigan State
DL	**Robert Windsor**	6-4	289	Sr.	Penn State
LB	**Mohamed Barry**	6-1	230	Sr.	Nebraska
LB	**Malik Harrison**	6-3	240	Sr.	Ohio State
LB	**Micah Parsons**	6-3	243	So.	Penn State
CB	**Dicaprio Bootle**	5-10	190	Jr.	Nebraska
CB	**Jeffrey Okudah**	6-1	200	Jr.	Ohio State
S	**Antoine Brooks Jr.**	5-11	210	Sr.	Maryland
S	**Geno Stone**	5-10	210	Jr.	Iowa

SECOND-TEAM SPECIALISTS

K	**Logan Justus**	5-11	181	Sr.	Indiana
P	**Will Hart**	6-3	192	Sr.	Michigan
KR	**KJ Hamler**	5-9	168	So.	Penn State
PR	**Rondale Moore**	5-9	180	So.	Purdue

JD Spielman
Nebraska

Stevie Scott
Indiana

Raequan Williams
Michigan State

Khaleke Hudson
Michigan

THIRD-TEAM OFFENSE

QB	**Adrian Martinez**	6-2	220	So.	Nebraska
RB	**Isaiah Bowser**	6-1	216	So.	Northwestern
RB	**Stevie Scott**	6-2	233	So.	Indiana
AP	**Maurice Washington**	6-1	190	So.	Nebraska
WR	**KJ Hamler**	5-9	168	So.	Penn State
WR	**Cody White**	6-3	218	Jr.	Michigan State
TE	**Jake Ferguson**	6-5	247	So.	Wisconsin
C	**Michal Menet**	6-4	312	Jr.	Penn State
OL	**Steven Gonzalez**	6-4	349	Sr.	Penn State
OL	**Brenden Jaimes**	6-6	300	Jr.	Nebraska
OL	**Michael Onwenu**	6-3	350	Sr.	Michigan
OL	**Alex Palczewski**	6-6	300	Jr.	Illinois

THIRD-TEAM DEFENSE

DL	**Chauncey Golston**	6-5	265	Jr.	Iowa
DL	**Mike Panasiuk**	6-4	300	Sr.	Michigan State
DL	**Kwity Paye**	6-4	260	Jr.	Michigan
DL	**Bobby Roundtree**	6-5	255	Jr.	Illinois
LB	**Zack Baun**	6-3	225	Sr.	Wisconsin
LB	**Blake Gallagher**	6-1	227	Jr.	Northwestern
LB	**Khaleke Hudson**	6-0	220	Sr.	Michigan
CB	**Matt Hankins**	6-0	185	Jr.	Iowa
CB	**John Reid**	5-10	189	Sr.	Penn State
S	**David Dowell**	6-1	205	Sr.	Michigan State
S	**Antoine Winfield Jr.**	5-10	205	So.	Minnesota

THIRD-TEAM SPECIALISTS

K	**Jake Moody**	6-0	177	So.	Michigan
P	**Adam Korsak**	6-1	193	Jr.	Rutgers
KR	**Demetrius Douglas**	6-0	190	So.	Minnesota
PR	**Demetrius Douglas**	6-0	190	So.	Minnesota

Martinez, Spielman: Jay Biggerstaff; Dobbins, Hudson: Harrison McClary; Gross-Matos: Joe Robbins; Scott: Donald Page; Williams: Bruce Schwartzman

Indiana **Hoosiers**

National Forecast: **67** • Big Ten East Prediction: **6** • Projected Record: **5-7, 2-7 Big Ten**

Stevie Scott

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Tom Allen
Record at School: 10-15 (2+ years)
Career Record: 10-15 (2+ years)
Offensive Coordinator: Kalen DeBoer
Defensive Coordinators: Mark Hagen, Kane Wommack
Location: Bloomington, IN
Stadium: Memorial Stadium (52,656)

KEY HOOSIERS

STEVIE SCOTT, RB Powerful between-the-tackles runner who ran for more than 100 yards in six games and led the Hoosiers with 11 TDs.

MARCELINO BALL, HUSKY Bounced back from a leg injury to lead the team in tackles for a loss while also recovering a fumble and intercepting a pass.

COY CRONK, OT Durable run and pass blocker who has excelled while starting 36 games beginning with his true freshman season.

KEY LOSSES

LUKE TIMIAN, WR Classic possession receiver led IU with 46 catches as the go-to guy on third down.

JONATHAN CRAWFORD, S Four-year starter and defensive captain who led with his words and play, making a team-leading 66 tackles.

DAMEON WILLIS, LB Consistent sideline-to-sideline attacker who made 62 tackles, including a career-high nine against Ohio State.

RISING STAR

JAMES MILLER picked Indiana over Florida State and Iowa in 2018, and the redshirt freshman impressed coach Tom Allen as the team's most improved linebacker in spring drills. Miller flashed his speed while making two tackles in a start against Michigan.

Tom Allen and his Indiana University football team need to flip the script. In back-to-back seasons, the Hoosiers have won all three nonconference games and inched to the brink of bowl eligibility, needing to defeat Purdue in the season finale to complete the deal.

And then whiffed. The Hoosiers finished 5–7 during both seasons Allen has been in charge. Indiana has endured 27 seasons without a bowl victory.

Credit Allen with refusing to embrace mediocrity. IU signed its highest-ranked recruiting class ever — No. 39 nationally and No. 8 in the Big Ten. The Hoosiers added redshirt freshman quarterback Jack Tuttle, a four-star signee who left Utah after one season and was granted immediate eligibility by the NCAA. Athletic director Fred Glass invested in staff by clearing Allen to add former Fresno State offensive coordinator Kalen DeBoer on a two-year deal worth $800,000 per season, a $300,000 jump over what IU paid DeBoer's predecessor.

Blend those additions to 15 returning starters (led by top halfback Stevie Scott) as well as a user-friendly nonconference schedule, and the Hoosiers should be positioned to have five wins when they enter the regular-season finale at Purdue Nov. 30.

OFFENSE Peyton Ramsey has passed with accuracy while starting 16 games the last two seasons, but his inconsistency throwing deep makes quarterback the most competitive position. Michael Penix Jr. was primed to overtake Ramsey until he suffered a knee injury against Penn State in October. If healthy, Penix is a better runner with a stronger arm. The competition stiffened when Tuttle, the son of a former IU kicker, transferred from Utah. Ranked the fifth-best pro-style quarterback prospect in the 2018 class by one service, Tuttle threw for 3,171 yards and 41 touchdowns at Mission Hills High School in suburban San Diego.

Considering that DeBoer's offense at Fresno State threw for 3,740 yards last season, look for IU to pick the guy who can get the ball to receivers Nick Westbrook, Donavan Hale, Whop Philyor, Miles Marshall and Ty Fryfogle as well as tight end Peyton Hendershot. In other words, a thrower more than a runner.

The Hoosiers have runners. What they need are more blockers. Stevie Scott was a late addition to the 2018 recruiting class but rolled for 204 yards against Virginia in the second game and averaged 5.0 yards per carry while gaining 1,137 on the ground. Ronnie Walker Jr. was a higher-ranked recruit, but he'll have to outperform freshman Sampson James, a four-star prospect from suburban Indianapolis who de-committed from Ohio State.

Two starters — tackle Coy Cronk and guard Simon Stepaniak — return on the offensive line. Two guys who stood out in spring ball were jumbo-sized Caleb Jones (6'8", 360) and Matthew Bedford, an intriguing and athletic freshman who enrolled early and picked the Hoosiers over Mississippi State and South Carolina.

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	vs. Ball State #
Sept.	7	Eastern Illinois
Sept.	14	Ohio State
Sept.	21	Connecticut
Sept.	28	at Michigan State
Oct.	12	Rutgers
Oct.	19	at Maryland
Oct.	26	at Nebraska
Nov.	2	Northwestern
Nov.	16	at Penn State
Nov.	23	Michigan
Nov.	30	at Purdue

#Indianapolis

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 5-7, 2-7 BIG TEN

Sept.	1	at FIU	W	38-28
Sept.	8	Virginia	W	20-16
Sept.	15	Ball State	W	38-10
Sept.	22	Michigan State	L	21-35
Sept.	29	at Rutgers	W	24-17
Oct.	6	at Ohio State	L	26-49
Oct.	13	Iowa	L	16-42
Oct.	20	Penn State	L	28-33
Oct.	26	at Minnesota	L	31-38
Nov.	10	Maryland	W	34-32
Nov.	17	at Michigan	L	20-31
Nov.	24	Purdue	L	21-28

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	B1G	NATIONAL
Scoring	26.4 ppg	10	88
Rushing	157.3 ypg	9	80
Passing	257.8 ypg	3	36
Total	415.2 ypg	7	52
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**B1G**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	29.9 ppg	10	81
Rushing	183.2 ypg	10	83
Passing	240.6 ypg	10	81
Total	423.8 ypg	11	83
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**B1G**	**NATIONAL**
+5	+0.42	5	33

2019 RECRUITS

1. Sampson James, RB, Avon, IN
2. Beau Robbins, DE, Carmel, IN
3. Cameron Williams, LB, Merrillville, IN
4. Josh Sanguinetti, S, Lauderdale Lakes, FL
5. Tiawan Mullen, CB, Fort Lauderdale, FL
6. Da'Shaun Brown, ATH, Racine, WI
7. D.K. Bonhomme, LB, Ottawa, ON
8. Matthew Bedford, OT, Cordova, TN
9. David Ellis, WR, Clinton Township, MI
10. Larry Tracy, CB, Indianapolis, IN
11. Jeramy Passmore, DE, Miami, FL
12. Ivory Winters, RB, Hayti, MO
13. Antoine Whitner, OG, Bradenton, FL
14. Mike Katic, OG, Gibsonia, PA
15. C.J. Person, DT, Montgomery, AL
16. Jordan Jakes, WR, Stockbridge, MD
17. Gary Cooper, TE, Miami, FL
18. Sio Nofoagatoto'a, DT, Ili'ili, American Samoa
19. Juan Harris, DT, Chicago, IL*
20. Tim Weaver, OT, Hellertown, PA
21. Sean Wracher, LS, Akron, OH

*junior college transfer

Recruits ranked according to the 247SportsComposite

Donald Page

ADVANCED STATS

5 Factors: College Football's Most Important Stats

Field Position[1]		Rank
Offense	29.6	75
Defense	30.1	83
Margin	-0.5	83

Efficiency[2]		Rank
Offense	43.9%	42
Defense	43.2%	88
Margin	+0.7%	68

Explosiveness[3]		Rank
Offense	5.5	86
Defense	6.0	98
Margin	-0.5	97

Finishing Drives[4]		Rank
Offense	4.1	107
Defense	4.9	95
Margin	-0.8	116

Adjusted TO Margin[5]		Rank
Projected	0.2	71
Actual	5	34
Margin	+4.8	23

KEY: **1**-Average starting field position by yard line; **2**-Rate of successful plays (gaining 50% of necessary yards on 1st down, 70% on 2nd down, 100% on 3rd down); **3**-Explosiveness=yards per play; **4**-Points per trip inside 40-yard line; **5**-TO margin accounting for "luck" • Advanced stats provided by Bill Connelly of SB Nation

NUMBERS TO KNOW

-0.8

Indiana averaged just 4.1 points per scoring opportunity (first downs inside the opponent's 40) and allowed 4.9, a margin of minus-0.8 points per trip that ranked 116th in FBS and 13th in the Big Ten. You think that maybe made a difference in three one-possession losses?

22.8

The Big Ten isn't a tempo lover's haven, but you can't blame Indiana. The Hoosiers averaged one play every 22.8 seconds, 20th in FBS and first in the conference.

42/86

Dink and dunk: Indiana ranked 42nd in offensive success rate (percentage of plays that gained at least 50 percent of necessary yardage on first down, 70 percent on second, or 100 percent on third or fourth) but only 86th in gains per game of 20-plus yards.

DEFENSE Allen came to Indiana as Mr. Fix-It for Indiana's defense, and the Hoosiers' total defense numbers improved during his first season (2016) as the coordinator as well as his first year as head coach. But in 2018, IU's allowed 423.8 yards per game, an increase of 83.7 yards. Allen has elevated linebackers coach Kane Wommack to coordinator and entrusted him with organizing the defense and making in-game calls.

The Hoosiers have concentrated on improving their defensive team speed as well as the athleticism of the front in the last three recruiting classes. Defensive end James Head looks primed to emerge as an outside pass rusher with tackles Jerome Johnson and junior college transfer Juan Harris assigned run-stopping duties.

Marcelino Ball is a rugged, experienced leader at the hybrid Husky position, serving as a linebacker or safety depending upon the offensive formation. Linebackers James Miller, Micah McFadden, Reakwon Jones and Thomas Allen, son of the head coach, will enable Wommack to rotate fresh players at that spot.

With three returning starters, the defensive backfield boasts talent and experience. Safety Bryant Fitzgerald led the team with three interceptions, while corners A'Shon Riggins and Andre Brown Jr. were trusted with one-on-one situations.

SPECIALISTS Logan Justus emerged as one of the most dependable placekickers in the Big Ten, making all 11 attempts from 40 yards and in and 15-of-18 overall. Haydon Whitehead averaged 40 yards per punt but concentrated more on placement than distance, and opponents were held under four yards per return. Fitzgerald and speedy Reese Taylor should return kickoffs, while Philyor, another speedball, handles punt returns.

FINAL ANALYSIS The Hoosiers have the backs and receivers to make things interesting. But to become more than merely interesting, DeBoer must develop a quarterback who can stretch the field as well as an offensive line that can protect him. Line play is a similar concern for a defense that has ranked in the bottom half of the Big Ten in rushing defense in 10 consecutive seasons. IU has improved its depth, speed and athleticism, but there's still a gap between the Hoosiers and the big four in the Big Ten East.

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (7)

WR	15	**Nick Westbrook (Sr.)**	82	Jacolby Hewitt (Fr.)
WR	6	**Donavan Hale (Sr.)**	3	Ty Fryfogle (Jr.)
WR	22	Whop Philyor (Jr.)	80	Miles Marshall (Fr.)
LT	54	**Coy Cronk (Sr.)**	76	Matthew Bedford (Fr.)
LG	57	Harry Crider (Jr.)	51	Mackenzie Nworah (Jr.)
C	68	Hunter Littlejohn (Sr.)	79	Charlie O'Connor (Fr.)
RG	72	**Simon Stepaniak (Sr.)**	78	Britt Beery (So.)
RT	77	Caleb Jones (So.)	52	DaVondre Love (Sr.)
TE	86	**Peyton Hendershot (So.)**	89	Matt Bjorson (So.)
QB	12	**Peyton Ramsey (Jr.)**	9	Michael Penix Jr. (Fr.)
RB	21	**Stevie Scott (So.)**	24	Sampson James (Fr.)

DEFENSE (8)

Returning Starters in Bold

DE	69	**Gavin Everett (Sr.)**	6	James Head (So.)
DT	98	**Jerome Johnson (Jr.)**	18	Jonathan King (Fr.)
DT	95	Brandon Wilson (Sr.)	93	Juan Harris (So.)
DE	99	**Allen Stallings IV (Sr.)**	87	Michael Ziemba (Jr.)
LB	8	James Miller (Fr.)	44	Thomas Allen (So.)
LB	7	**Reakwon Jones (Sr.)**	47	Micah McFadden (So.)
HB	42	**Marcelino Ball (Jr.)**	34	Cam Jones (So.)
CB	28	A'Shon Riggins (Sr.)	17	**Raheem Layne (Jr.)**
CB	14	**Andre Brown Jr. (Sr.)**	23	Jaylin Williams (So.)
SS	31	Bryant Fitzgerald (So.)	29	**Khalil Bryant (Sr.)**
FS	1	Juwan Burgess (So.)	25	Devon Matthews (So.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	82	Logan Justus (Sr.)	KR	31	Bryant Fitzgerald (So.)
P	94	Haydon Whitehead (Sr.)	PR	22	Whop Philyor (Jr.)

2018 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Peyton Ramsey	447	295	2,875	19	13
Michael Penix Jr.	34	21	219	1	0

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD
Stevie Scott	228	1,137	5.0	10
Peyton Ramsey	111	354	3.2	5
Ronnie Walker Jr.	32	141	4.4	2

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Luke Timian	46	422	9.2	0
Nick Westbrook	42	590	14.1	4
Donavan Hale	42	508	12.1	6
J-Shun Harris	37	325	8.8	2
Ty Fryfogle	29	381	13.1	3

KICKING: **Logan Justus, 15-18 FGs, 77 pts.**

TACKLES: Jonathan Crawford, 66; Dameon Willis, 62

SACKS: **Jerome Johnson, 3.5**

INTERCEPTIONS: **Bryant Fitzgerald, 3**

Returning Players in **Bold**

SCOUTING THE HOOSIERS

OPPOSING COACHES SIZE UP INDIANA

"You hate playing this team. They're always competitive; they're always fighting back and staying in games even when they're down. They've been decent offensively, and they can scare you with their tempo if your guys aren't locked in. … They've got some nice young backs and a quarterback (Peyton Ramsey) that can really give them a chance. They're changing OCs, and the guy from Fresno (Kalen DeBoer) should change some things up. They've had trouble finding the right QB to build a program around. A lot of us thought the other QB, Michael Penix Jr., could be that guy, but he tore his ACL. He was probably their best talent at the position. … Defensively they're giving up too many points. They're bad against big plays; you can take the top off on them. The line loses a lot. It's going be a tough year for Tom Allen, but he's sort of a magician at finding good defenses with bad rosters. … Being in the Big Ten East doesn't help them at all when you're trying to build from scratch. It's why they've been stuck right at five wins. … Allen is highly respected and really well connected in the state. He's doing a great job recruiting in state, even against Purdue, who really has it going. And it's not an easy place to recruit top-level guys to. It's just not a program with an identity when you get outside of that state. It's a basketball school."

Maryland **Terrapins**

National Forecast: **65** • Big Ten East Prediction: **5** • Projected Record: **5-7, 3-6 Big Ten**

Antoine Brooks Jr.

Enthusiasm for Maryland football had to take a redshirt season last year. The tragic death of offensive lineman Jordan McNair at a team workout cast a long shadow all season.

Third-year coach DJ Durkin was suspended and ultimately dismissed; medical practices were scrutinized and revamped; and a local son — Mike Locksley — has been brought home to restore trust in the Terrapin brand.

Locksley — yes, yes, his career record as a head coach is 3-31 — quickly proved to be the right man for the job. Now with a little Nick Saban magic coaching dust sprinkled on him after three years at Alabama, he assembled a completely new staff, salvaged the 2019 recruiting class and has said and done all the right things. Even McNair's father showed up at Locksley's introductory press conference in the sparkling new Cole Field House indoor practice facility to offer support.

But what is "normal" for the Terrapins? Is it the combined eight-year record of 38–61 under Durkin and Randy Edsall (and interims Matt Canada and Locksley), or is it the seven-bowl glory of Ralph Friedgen's 10 seasons, when Locksley was also an assistant?

"I have a vision, a picture in my mind of what it felt like and what it looked like when we [won under Friedgen] as a team," says Locksley, who recruited many prominent locals to College Park. "I know it can be done again."

OFFENSE A lot of players from the talent-rich "DMV" (Delaware, Maryland, Virginia) will be in the red, black and gold this fall for Locksley. Many of those top Terrapins are skilled players on offense.

Running back Anthony McFarland Jr. set a school freshman record with 1,034 yards and averaged 7.9 yards per carry. He had back-to-back 200-yard rushing games (against Indiana and Ohio State) and was a big play waiting to happen for an offense that averaged 230.2 yards rushing per game, 17th best in the nation.

The emphasis will change a bit under the new staff. Plus, there's likely a new opening-day quarterback for the fourth straight season, with Virginia Tech transfer Josh Jackson enrolled this summer.

The 6'1" Jackson is a more prototypical QB than diminutive incumbent Tyrrell Pigrome, though "Piggy" had a great spring before Jackson arrived. Jackson twice won the starting job for the Hokies and put up a Tech freshman-record 2,991 yards and 20 touchdowns passing in 2017. He started three games last season but was injured after throwing for 575 yards. Over his Hokie career, Jackson was 11–5 as a starter, completing 59.9 percent of his throws with 25 touchdowns and 10 interceptions.

He'll have some talented targets in Jeshaun Jones, Dontay Demus and DJ Turner. Buffalo transfer Tyler Mabry should step in at tight end, and Locksley loves two-tight end formations, so hybrid Chigoziem Okonkwo will still see lots of duty.

Speedy Lorenzo "LoLo" Harrison, Javon Leake and short-yardage specialist Tayon Fleet-Davis add great

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Mike Locksley
Record at School: 1-5 (interim coach in 2015)
Career Record: 3-31 (3+ years)
Offensive Coordinators: Scottie Montgomery, Joker Phillips
Defensive Coordinator: Jon Hoke
Location: College Park, MD
Stadium: Maryland Stadium (51,802)

KEY TERRAPINS

JOSH JACKSON, QB Has the skill set Locksley wants at QB in the pass-friendly spread offense, but will be the fifth different opening-day QB at Maryland since 2014.

ANTHONY MCFARLAND JR., RB Had a 298-yard game against Ohio State and set a Maryland freshman record with 1,034 rushing yards.

ANTOINE BROOKS JR., DB Second-team All-Big Ten; led the Terps with 9.5 tackles for a loss and ranked third on the team with 68 tackles.

KEY LOSSES

DAMIAN PRINCE, OT Prince was a linchpin for a strong ground game. He's one of three offensive line starters who need to be replaced.

TRE WATSON, MLB Led the Big Ten in tackles per game (9.5) and interceptions (five), earning All-America honors along the way.

DARNELL SAVAGE, S Had four interceptions and anchored the defense with 52 tackles, 5.5 for a loss.

RISING STAR

Freshman defensive back **NICK CROSS** of DeMatha Catholic was the top-rated recruit in Maryland, the first such signee for the Terps since Mike Locksley landed Damian Prince in 2014. The former Florida State commit will be on the field somewhere when the season begins.

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	Howard
Sept.	7	Syracuse
Sept.	14	at Temple
Sept.	27	Penn State
Oct.	5	at Rutgers
Oct.	12	at Purdue
Oct.	19	Indiana
Oct.	26	at Minnesota
Nov.	2	Michigan
Nov.	9	at Ohio State
Nov.	23	Nebraska
Nov.	30	at Michigan State

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 5-7, 3-6 BIG TEN

Sept.	1	vs. Texas #	W	34-29
Sept.	8	at Bowling Green	W	45-14
Sept.	15	Temple	L	14-35
Sept.	22	Minnesota	W	42-13
Oct.	6	at Michigan	L	21-42
Oct.	13	Rutgers	W	34-7
Oct.	20	at Iowa	L	0-23
Oct.	27	Illinois	W	63-33
Nov.	3	Michigan State	L	3-24
Nov.	10	at Indiana	L	32-34
Nov.	17	Ohio State (ot)	L	51-52
Nov.	24	at Penn State	L	3-38

#Landover, MD

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	B1G	NATIONAL
Scoring	28.5 ppg	9	68
Rushing	230.2 ypg	3	17
Passing	141.3 ypg	13	122
Total	371.4 ypg	11	95
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**B1G**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	28.7 ppg	9	78
Rushing	183.9 ypg	11	85
Passing	206.5 ypg	6	42
Total	390.4 ypg	7	63
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**B1G**	**NATIONAL**
+9	+0.75	1	15

2019 RECRUITS

1. Nick Cross, S, Hyattsville, MD
2. Isaiah Hazel, WR, Upper Marlboro, MD
3. Lance LeGendre, QB, New Orleans, LA
4. Cortez Andrews, LB, Tallahassee, FL
5. Deonte Banks, CB, Edgewood, MD
6. Anthony Booker, DE, Cincinnati, OH
7. Treron Collins, S, Fairburn, GA
8. Kameron Blount, LB, Waldorf, MD
9. Dino Tomlin, WR, Pittsburgh, PA
10. Deshawn Holt, DE, Waldorf, MD
11. Sam Okuayinonu, DE, Lowell, MA*
12. Mason Lunsford, OT, Olney, MD
13. Lavonte Gater, DB, Washington, DC
14. Parris Heath, OG, Spring Valley, NY*
15. Erwin Byrd, CB, Powder Springs, GA
16. Tyler Devera, TE, Oradell, NJ
17. Marcus Finger, OT, Fort Myers, FL
18. Malik Jackson, TE, Laurel, MD

*junior college transfer

Recruits ranked according to the 247SportsComposite

Bruce Schwartzman

ADVANCED STATS

5 Factors: College Football's Most Important Stats

Field Position[1]		Rank
Offense	28.8	96
Defense	28.8	55
Margin	**+0.0**	**73**

Efficiency[2]		Rank
Offense	38.4%	105
Defense	42.7%	81
Margin	**-4.3%**	**101**

Explosiveness[3]		Rank
Offense	6.1	36
Defense	5.6	54
Margin	**+0.5**	**41**

Finishing Drives[4]		Rank
Offense	5.0	27
Defense	4.5	58
Margin	**+0.5**	**36**

Adjusted TO Margin[5]		Rank
Projected	-0.7	78
Actual	9	15
Margin	**+9.7**	**3**

KEY: 1-Average starting field position by yard line; **2**-Rate of successful plays (gaining 50% of necessary yards on 1st down, 70% on 2nd down, 100% on 3rd down); **3**-Explosiveness=yards per play; **4**-Points per trip inside 40-yard line; **5**-TO margin accounting for "luck" • Advanced stats provided by Bill Connelly of SB Nation

NUMBERS TO KNOW

11

Maryland quarterbacks proved adept and mobile, but they also scrambled their way into sacks. They were sacked on 11 percent of their overall pass attempts, 124th in FBS and last in the Big Ten.

-1.3

Those negative plays led to third-and-longs. Maryland's average third down on offense required 8.1 yards to go (123rd in the country), while opponents averaged 6.8 yards to go (94th). That margin of minus-1.3 yards per third down was sixth worst in FBS.

+9.7

Based on national averages for fumble recovery rates and the ratio of interceptions to passes broken up, Maryland's turnover margin should have been about minus-0.7. Instead, it was plus-9. The 9.7-turnover difference was the third luckiest in FBS and tops in the Big Ten.

depth in the backfield. Terrance Davis and Sean Christie are solid returnees up front, and redshirt freshman tackle Jaelyn Duncan looks like a comer. Former East Carolina head coach Scottie Montgomery likely will call the plays.

DEFENSE Things get a little dicier on a defense that returns just four starters from a unit that gave up 390.4 yards and 28.7 points per game. With some injuries, there were hardly enough bodies to fill out a depth chart in the spring.

Jordan Mosley began practices as an undersized linebacker, then moved to strong safety after veteran Antwaine Richardson went down with a season-ending knee injury. Mosley finally landed at free safety. Don't be surprised if redshirt freshman Raymond Boone and four-star prospect Nick Cross get a lot of playing time.

One constant is All-Big Ten nickel back Antoine Brooks Jr., who led the Terps with 9.5 tackles for a loss and will be the de facto fourth linebacker in coordinator Jon Hoke's 3-4. Corner Tino Ellis started every game and was sixth in the conference in passes defended. Fellow senior Marcus Lewis has experience at the other corner.

Ohio State transfer Keandre Jones fills a big hole at linebacker if he gets his hardship waiver, but the front seven is undersized and not very experienced. Adam McLean is locked in at nose tackle with fellow senior Keiron Howard in reserve, but it could be a revolving door at end.

SPECIALISTS Joseph Petrino hit 12-of-14 field goal attempts as a freshman, including the first 11 of his career. Punter Wade Lees transferred, leaving another roster hole that will be filled by a walk-on freshman. Leake and Jeshaun Jones are proven commodities in the return game.

FINAL ANALYSIS It took D.C. native and Towson grad Locksley a long time to land his dream job, and it's going to take more time to rebuild. The spring ended with the presumptive QB still not on campus and depth issues on the offensive line. It's even more dire on defense, where Maryland seems undermanned up front and in the linebacker corps. The Big Ten has been unforgiving, particularly the East Division. Locksley's legendary recruiting prowess is a timely answer, but this process will take time.

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (3)

WR	6	Jeshaun Jones (So.)	14	Tahj Capehart (So.)
WR	1	DJ Turner (Sr.)	21	Darryl Jones (So.)
WR	7	Dontay Demus (So.)	15	Brian Cobbs (So.)
LT	71	Jaelyn Duncan (Fr.)	67	Tyran Hunt (So.)
LG	**70**	**Sean Christie (Sr.)**	55	Austin Fontaine (Fr.)
C	73	Johnny Jordan (Jr.)	68	Ellis McKennie (Sr.)
RG	**75**	**Terrance Davis (Sr.)**	74	Brian Plummer (Jr.)
RT	72	Marcus Minor (Jr.)	57	TJ Bradley (Jr.)
TE		Tyler Mabry (Sr.)	9	ChigoziemOkonkwo(So.)
QB		Josh Jackson (Jr.)	3	Tyrrell Pigrome (Jr.)
RB	5	**Anthony McFarland (So.)**	2	Lorenzo Harrison III (Jr.)

DEFENSE (4)

Returning Starters in Bold

DE	30	Durell Nchami (So.)	10	Tyler Baylor (Fr.)
NT	**91**	**Adam McLean (Sr.)**	59	Keiron Howard (Sr.)
DE	96	Brett Kulka (Sr.)	95	Lawtez Rogers (So.)
OLB	16	Ayinde Eley (So.)	19	Ahmad McCullough (So.)
ILB	**22**	**Isaiah Davis (Sr.)**	31	Nnamdi Egbuaba (Sr.)
ILB	4	Keandre Jones (Sr.)	44	Chance Campbell (So.)
NB	**25**	**Antoine Brooks Jr. (Sr.)**		Nick Cross (Fr.)
CB	**7**	**Tino Ellis (Sr.)**	13	Rayshad Lewis (Jr.)
CB	8	Marcus Lewis (Sr.)	29	Sean Savoy (Jr.)
FS	18	Jordan Mosley (So.)	11	Fofie Bazzie (So.)
SS	21	Raymond Boone (Fr.)	12	Vincent Flythe (Fr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	27	Joseph Petrino (So.)	KR	20	Javon Leake (Jr.)
P		Anthony Pecora (Fr.)	PR	6	Jeshaun Jones (So.)

2018 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Kasim Hill	170	84	1,083	9	4
Tyrrell Pigrome	**67**	**37**	**561**	**2**	**1**

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD
Anthony McFarland Jr.	**131**	**1,034**	**7.9**	**4**
Ty Johnson	66	506	7.7	3
Tayon Fleet-Davis	**75**	**331**	**4.4**	**5**
Javon Leake	**34**	**309**	**9.1**	**7**

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Taivon Jacobs	25	328	13.1	2
Jeshaun Jones	**22**	**288**	**13.1**	**5**
Dontay Demus	**13**	**278**	**21.4**	**0**
DJ Turner	**13**	**159**	**12.2**	**1**

KICKING: **Joseph Petrino, 12-14 FGs, 76 pts.**

TACKLES: Tre Watson, 114; **Isaiah Davis, 94**

SACKS: Byron Cowart, 3.0

INTERCEPTIONS: Tre Watson, 5

Returning Players in **Bold**

SCOUTING THE TERRAPINS

OPPOSING COACHES SIZE UP MARYLAND

"Expect a lot of change and a lot of figuring it out as they go. With everything those kids have gone through as a program, there's more than a summer's worth of work to get the culture right. … When Matt Canada was there, they did a lot of his typical stuff running shifts and motions, and it worked pretty well because they have athletes. It's a more talented team than you would expect; they've just had horrible culture problems. You could see them playing with emotion last year, which is great when you're up, but they'd crash too. … The QB position needs to be better. (Virginia Tech transfer) Josh Jackson might be the winner; he's built for what they want to do. … Don't look at Alabama for a blueprint, that's not really a good comparison because the talent is so much different. When Mike Locksley was at Illinois with Juice Williams, that's closer to what you might see — spread out, lots of read plays, and that was really missing in Canada's offense, getting an athletic quarterback out in the run game. … The defense needs a fresh start. The front is bad, they need a lot of work. The DC (Jon Hoke) is an NFL guy. It will be interesting to see how they come out early. … They're not Rutgers. They can get in on kids. Even at their worst these last few years, they're getting guys to visit campus that other top schools want."

Michigan **Wolverines**

National Forecast: **4** • Big Ten East Prediction: **1** • Projected Record: **12-1, 8-1 Big Ten**

Shea Patterson

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Jim Harbaugh
Record at School: 38-14 (4 years)
Career Record: 96-41 (11 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Josh Gattis
Defensive Coordinator: Don Brown
Location: Ann Arbor, MI
Stadium: Michigan Stadium (107,601)

KEY WOLVERINES

SHEA PATTERSON, QB Ole Miss transfer brought some much-needed stability to the position. Poised for a big senior season.

LAVERT HILL, CB After flirting with the NFL, Hill decided to stay and will help the stability at a corner position that lacks experience.

NICO COLLINS, WR After a breakout sophomore season, another year of chemistry with Patterson should see Collins expand on his numbers this season.

KEY LOSSES

DEVIN BUSH JR., LB Replacing a consensus All-American will be no easy feat for a defense that relied on Bush's speed and playmaking ability.

CHASE WINOVICH, DL A man with a motor that never stops; his effort will be missed.

RASHAN GARY, DL Losing a first-round talent like Gary is tough for the Wolverines — especially when his departure isn't the only one at his position group.

RISING STAR

Defensive end **KWITY PAYE** finished last season with 29 total tackles, 5.5 tackles for a loss and two sacks as a sophomore reserve. Paye is expected to have a larger role with the defense in wake of the departures of Rashan Gary and Chase Winovich.

With a new face at the helm of the Michigan offense in offensive coordinator Josh Gattis, the Wolverines are entering the 2019 season wide-eyed and full of ambition as they hope to improve on a 10–3 record and finally usurp Ohio State at the top of the Big Ten in Jim Harbaugh's fifth season. With that being said, if the bowl game was any indication of the kind of holes the Wolverines need to fill, there's plenty of work to be done on both sides of the ball to get back to the form they showed during their 10-game winning streak last season.

OFFENSE The biggest question with Gattis' addition to the offense: What changes, exactly? The short answer: Gattis will introduce spread concepts and, in his words, completely remove the huddle from the equation.

This style of offense suits returning quarterback Shea Patterson, who finished last season with 2,600 yards and 22 touchdowns through the air. Before his transfer to U-M, Patterson ran a similar offense at Ole Miss, so the spread isn't exactly foreign territory for the senior.

His return is a big boost for a quarterback room that has plenty of unproven depth. Dylan McCaffrey, Joe Milton, Brandon Peters and Cade McNamara are all expected to compete for positioning behind Patterson.

While the offense has many familiar faces returning, perhaps the one position that was hit hardest by attrition is running back. The Wolverines will have to recover from losing senior Karan Higdon and, unexpectedly, senior-to-be Chris Evans, whose status with the football program remains up in the air.

Returning players Christian Turner, who saw expanded carries in the Peach Bowl, and Tru Wilson are the only returning running backs with starting experience. Players such as Hassan Haskins and Ben VanSumeren have been moved to running back to add depth to the position, as the Wolverines often tinker with positions to find the best fit. The coaching staff is excited to see true freshman and early enrollee Zach Charbonnet, one of the top-rated running backs in the 2019 recruiting cycle, get to work on the field. However, that work will have to wait, as Charbonnet missed spring practice due to a medical procedure he had upon arriving in Ann Arbor.

The offensive line will be a position of strength for the Wolverines, as every player returns except for Juwann Bushell-Beatty at right tackle. After missing a handful of games at the end of the year, Andrew Stueber filled in for Bushell-Beatty at the Peach Bowl and returns as the sole right tackle with game experience.

The wide receiver position features returning faces such as Donovan Peoples-Jones, Nico Collins, Ronnie Bell, Oliver Martin and Tarik Black. This group is very talented but has lacked consistency due in part to injuries.

DEFENSE The Michigan defense was hit hard by off-season attrition. Losing players such as defensive linemen Rashan Gary and Chase Winovich and linebacker Devin

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	Middle Tennessee
Sept.	7	Army
Sept.	21	at Wisconsin
Sept.	28	Rutgers
Oct.	5	Iowa
Oct.	12	at Illinois
Oct.	19	at Penn State
Oct.	26	Notre Dame
Nov.	2	at Maryland
Nov.	16	Michigan State
Nov.	23	at Indiana
Nov.	30	Ohio State

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 10-3, 8-1 BIG TEN

Sept.	1	at Notre Dame	L	17-24
Sept.	8	Western Michigan	W	49-3
Sept.	15	SMU	W	45-20
Sept.	22	Nebraska	W	56-10
Sept.	29	at Northwestern	W	20-17
Oct.	6	Maryland	W	42-21
Oct.	13	Wisconsin	W	38-13
Oct.	20	at Michigan State	W	21-7
Nov.	3	Penn State	W	42-7
Nov.	10	at Rutgers	W	42-7
Nov.	17	Indiana	W	31-20
Nov.	24	at Ohio State	L	39-62
Dec.	29	vs. Florida #	L	15-41

#Peach Bowl

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	B1G	NATIONAL
Scoring	35.2 ppg	2	21
Rushing	203.8 ypg	6	30
Passing	215.7 ypg	9	80
Total	419.5 ypg	6	50
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**B1G**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	19.4 ppg	3	16
Rushing	127.4 ypg	3	23
Passing	147.8 ypg	1	2
Total	275.2 ypg	1	2
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**B1G**	**NATIONAL**
+5	+0.38	6	35

2019 RECRUITS

1. Daxton Hill, S, Tulsa, OK
2. Chris Hinton, DT, Johns Creek, GA
3. Zach Charbonnet, RB, Camarillo, CA
4. Mazi Smith, DT, Grand Rapids, MI
5. Trente Jones, OT, Grayson, GA
6. Nolan Rumler, OG, Akron, OH
7. Cornelius Johnson, WR, Greenwich, CT
8. Trevor Keegan, OT, Crystal Lake, IL
9. Jalen Perry, CB, Dacula, GA
10. Anthony Solomon, LB, Fort Lauderdale, FL
11. Karsen Barnhart, OG, Paw Paw, MI
12. Cade McNamara, QB, Reno NV
13. Giles Jackson, WR, Antioch, CA
14. David Ojabo, DE, Aberdeen, Scotland
15. Quinten Johnson, S, Washington, DC
16. Erick All, TE, Fairfield, OH
17. Mike Morris, DE, Delray Beach, FL
18. DJ Turner, CB, Suwanee, FL
19. Charles Thomas, LB, Atlanta, GA
20. Zach Carpenter, OG, Cincinnati, OH
21. Jack Stewart, OT, New Canaan, CT
22. Mike Sainristil, WR, Everett, MA
23. Gabe Newburg, DE, Clayton, OH
24. George Johnson, WR, Stuart, FL
25. Quintel Kent, WR, Lakewood, OH
26. Joey Velazquez, S, Columbus, OH

Recruits ranked according to the 247SportsComposite

Bruce Schwartzman

ADVANCED STATS

5 Factors: College Football's Most Important Stats

Field Position[1]		Rank
Offense	32.9	10
Defense	26.1	5
Margin	**+6.8**	**4**

Efficiency[2]		Rank
Offense	45.4%	28
Defense	33.1%	3
Margin	**+12.3%**	**4**

Explosiveness[3]		Rank
Offense	6.1	42
Defense	4.6	8
Margin	**+1.5**	**10**

Finishing Drives[4]		Rank
Offense	4.6	72
Defense	5.0	100
Margin	**-0.4**	**93**

Adjusted TO Margin[5]		Rank
Projected	0.9	60
Actual	5	34
Margin	**+4.1**	**27**

KEY: 1-Average starting field position by yard line; **2**-Rate of successful plays (gaining 50% of necessary yards on 1st down, 70% on 2nd down, 100% on 3rd down); **3**-Explosiveness=yards per play; **4**-Points per trip inside 40-yard line; **5**-TO margin accounting for "luck" • Advanced stats provided by Bill Connelly of SB Nation

NUMBERS TO KNOW

45.4/5.8

Big plays were an issue for the Michigan offense, but the Wolverines were still pretty efficient. Their success rate (percentage of plays that gained at least 50 percent of necessary yardage on first down, 70 percent on second, or 100 percent on third or fourth) was 45.4 percent (28th in FBS), and they averaged 5.8 yards to go on third down (second).

+6.8

Solid efficiency leads to solid field position. Michigan's field position margin of plus-6.8 yards per drive (32.9 on offense, 26.1 on defense) ranked fourth in FBS and first in the Big Ten.

29.9

Michigan's offense was the slowest in a slow conference: The Wolverines averaged one play every 29.9 seconds, slowest in the Big Ten and ninth slowest overall.

Bush Jr. would devastate any defense. Of course, the player departures aren't the only losses, as the Wolverines also lost defensive line coach Greg Mattison to arch-rival Ohio State, leaving Mattison's replacement, Shaun Nua, with some work to do.

With that being said, the cupboard certainly isn't bare. Players such as Carlo Kemp, Michael Dwumfour and Aidan Hutchinson all return to the line and bring plenty of potential. Kwity Paye and linebacker/defensive lineman hybrid Josh Uche look to make the most of their expanded roles on the outside as well. Donovan Jeter and Luiji Vilain, both talented prospects coming out of high school, have yet to establish themselves due to injuries but are looking to stay healthy and make an impact. Other players who have a chance to work their way up the depth chart include Ron Johnson, Taylor Upshaw, Julius Welschof and true freshmen Mazi Smith and David Ojabo.

It was readily apparent during the Wolverines' bowl loss to Florida that replacing Bush, a consensus All-American who sat out the game to rest an injured hip, will certainly be a tall task. Returning linebacker Josh Ross worked the middle of the field in Bush's absence in the bowl game and is expected to compete for the job. Outside linebacker Devin Gil will also compete at the open spot in a platoon-type role, with Jordan Anthony also in the mix.

SPECIALISTS An under-the-radar position battle to keep an eye on is at placekicker. Quinn Nordin won the starting job at the beginning of last season, but after an illness and an 11-for-16 conversion rate, Nordin was replaced by Jake Moody, who spent the year as the kickoff specialist. Moody kicked six field goals, a school record, in the victory over Indiana and never looked back. The choice to determine the starter won't be an easy one.

FINAL ANALYSIS While it'll be interesting to see how the Wolverines fill the holes on both sides of the ball, it's certainly not uncharted territory for Harbaugh and his program. After doing it once before with arguably a bigger rebuild in 2017, the Wolverines look primed to make another run at the Big Ten East title.

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (7)

WR	**9**	**Donovan Peoples-Jones (Jr.)**	**4**	**Nico Collins (Jr.)**
WR	7	Tarik Black (Jr.)	80	Oliver Martin (Sr.)
WR	19	Mike Sainristil (Fr.)	8	Ronnie Bell (So.)
LT	**75**	**Jon Runyan (Sr.)**	76	Ryan Hayes (So.)
LG	**74**	**Ben Bredeson (Sr.)**	66	Chuck Filiaga (Jr.)
C	**51**	**Cesar Ruiz (Jr.)**	72	Stephen Spanellis (Sr.)
RG	**50**	**Michael Onwenu (Sr.)**	59	Joel Honigford (Jr.)
RT	71	Andrew Stueber (Jr.)	73	Jalen Mayfield (So.)
TE	84	Sean McKeon (Sr.)	82	Nick Eubanks (Sr.)
QB	**2**	**Shea Patterson (Sr.)**	10	Dylan McCaffrey (Jr.)
RB	13	Tru Wilson (Sr.)	3	Christian Turner (So.)

DEFENSE (5)

Returning Starters in Bold

DE	97	Aidan Hutchinson (So.)	18	Luiji Vilain (Jr.)
DT	**2**	**Carlo Kemp (Sr.)**	58	Mazi Smith (Fr.)
DT	50	Michael Dwumfour (Sr.)	95	Donovan Jeter (Jr.)
DE	19	Kwity Paye (Jr.)	18	Luiji Vilain (Jr.)
SLB	6	Josh Uche (Sr.)	29	Jordan Glasgow (Sr.)
MLB	12	Josh Ross (Jr.)	8	Devin Gil (Sr.)
WLB	**8**	**Devin Gil (Sr.)**	44	Cameron McGrone (So.)
VIPER	**7**	**Khaleke Hudson (Sr.)**	29	Jordan Glasgow (Sr.)
CB	**24**	**Lavert Hill (Sr.)**	1	Ambry Thomas (Jr.)
CB	20	Brad Hawkins (Jr.)	16	Jalen Kelly-Powell (Jr.)
S	**14**	**Josh Metellus (Sr.)**	26	J'Marick Woods (Jr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	2	Jake Moody (So.)	**KR**	9	Donovan Peoples-Jones (Jr.)
P	17	Will Hart (Sr.)	**PR**	1	Ambry Thomas (Jr.)

2018 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Shea Patterson	**325**	**210**	**2,600**	**22**	**7**
Dylan McCaffrey	**15**	**8**	**126**	**2**	**0**
Joe Milton	**4**	**3**	**58**	**0**	**1**

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD
Karan Higdon	224	1,178	5.3	10
Chris Evans	81	423	5.2	4
Tru Wilson	**62**	**364**	**5.9**	**1**
Shea Patterson	**76**	**273**	**3.6**	**2**

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Donovan Peoples-Jones	**47**	**612**	**13.0**	**8**
Nico Collins	**38**	**632**	**16.6**	**6**
Zach Gentry	32	514	16.1	2

KICKING: Quinn Nordin, 11-16 FGs, 78 pts.; Jake Moody, 10-11 FGs, 35 pts.

TACKLES: Devin Bush, 79; Tyree Kinnel, 74

SACKS: Josh Uche, 7.0

INTERCEPTIONS: Josh Metellus, 3; Brandon Watson, 3

Returning Players in **Bold**

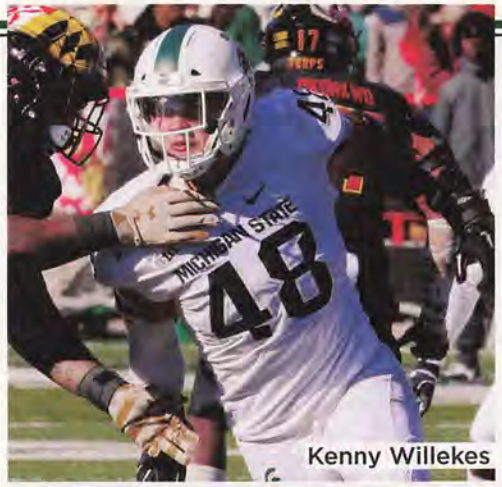
SCOUTING THE WOLVERINES

OPPOSING COACHES SIZE UP MICHIGAN

"Shea Patterson helped change the identity of the team. You can't oversell what his play style did for Michigan. But what will the changes really be on offense? Are they truly going to embrace the spread with (new OC) Josh Gattis? It's hard to see Jim Harbaugh doing that, but they have the right personnel to do it. Even with the changes last year they were still pretty close to that Stanford, 22 personnel stuff Harbaugh has always done. … A lot of coaches think they still want to grind you out and don't want to embrace the change. They've done a great job recruiting on offense; they can switch to a full on spread and score a lot this season. It's not even a major change — it was just that you had to scout and respect that the kid could pull it and run, or just the threat of it. … Defensively, they're tough. Absolutely one of the best and meanest defenses in college football. There's enough skill and enough buy-in where they can do a lot of different things. If you don't have athleticism they're going to wear you out. They're high pressure, lots of blitz and play man coverage almost all the time. … Ohio State has had their number, but that's because they're the only ones who have the talent to go one on one against that man coverage. Ohio State was athletic enough to pick and rub and beat them at their game."

Michigan State **Spartans**

National Forecast: **16** • Big Ten East Prediction: **4** • Projected Record: **8-4, 5-4 Big Ten**



Kenny Willekes

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Mark Dantonio
Record at School: 107-51 (12 years)
Career Record: 125-68 (15 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Brad Salem
Defensive Coordinator: Mike Tressel
Location: East Lansing, MI
Stadium: Spartan Stadium (75,005)

KEY SPARTANS

BRIAN LEWERKE, QB Third-year starter is driven to regain the magic of his sophomore year and build on it. He has 5,214 career passing yards and is 15–10 as a starter.

KENNY WILLEKES, DE Former walk-on led the country in QB hits by edge rushers last year with 23, according to *Pro Football Focus*.

JOE BACHIE, LB With 214 career tackles, the second-year captain was team MVP two years ago as a sophomore and is a demanding leader.

KEY LOSSES

JUSTIN LAYNE, CB Opted for the NFL Draft after his junior year. He was terrific vs. the run and pass, and did double duty as a receiver.

KHARI WILLIS, DB Third-team All-Big Ten pick was the team's best leader, both vocally and by example.

FELTON DAVIS, WR The 6'4" receiver played in only seven games in 2018 but still earned honorable mention All-Big Ten recognition.

RISING STAR

Freshman running back **ANTHONY WILLIAMS JR.** was one of seven early enrollees for spring practice and stood out in each of the Spartans' spring scrimmages. He provides a much-needed burst of speed and elusiveness. If he masters pass protection, he will play early.

An elite defense and the return of a healthy, capable quarterback in Brian Lewerke will stack Michigan State with the goods to give any team trouble in 2019. A revamped offensive approach will make MSU an intriguing variable in the tight Big Ten East. The Spartans aren't expected to win their fourth division title in nine years, but they will at least have a major impact on who does.

Mark Dantonio had notched double-digit win totals in four of the previous five seasons, but a massive rash of injuries ended hopes of doing it again in 2018. Injuries caused 10 offensive starters to miss 48 games last year, resulting in the Spartans ranking No. 117 in the nation in total offense.

MSU's 85 wins since 2010 are third most in the Big Ten and tied for No. 11 among Power 5 teams. But last year's offensive implosion caused Dantonio to shuffle his staff and move away from a slow-huddle, two-back offense in favor of a mainstream, one-back, up-tempo approach under new offensive coordinator Brad Salem.

OFFENSE After Lewerke suffered a shoulder injury during an upset victory at Penn State in Week 6, the Spartans scored seven or fewer points in four of their last seven games. Lewerke played through pain and a hampered throwing motion in four of those games, but he wasn't himself, and neither were the Spartans. Lewerke's arm strength, accuracy and confidence are back, and so is the mobility and playmaking knack that helped him become honorable mention All-Big Ten as a sophomore.

Cody White, Darrell Stewart Jr. and Jalen Nailor each missed games with injuries last year but are back to give the Spartans a solid trio of receivers. White has good size and is a big-play threat on the outside. Stewart has 101 career catches and is primed for his best season in the slot. Slippery tight end Matt Dotson had 14 catches in 2018 and has downfield potential.

Versatile tailback Connor Heyward rushed for 529 yards to go with 32 catches last year, but he isn't a game-breaker. No Spartan showed feature-back ability when LJ Scott missed eight games last year. La'Darius Jefferson has size and functionality. Freshmen Elijah Collins and Anthony Williams Jr. showed promise in the spring. With Scott gone, someone needs to rise.

Seven offensive linemen with starting experience return from a unit that sorted through nine different starting lineups due to injury last year. Michigan State lacked physicality up front in 2018, failing to get movement on double-team blocks. Several guys have each added at least 10 pounds, including left tackle Cole Chewins and right tackle Jordan Reid, as the Spartans seek improvement under venerable first-year offensive line coach Jim Bollman. Matt Allen and Kevin Jarvis will be solid at center and right guard, respectively.

DEFENSE Michigan State led the nation in rush defense last year and will be among the best in 2019 with defensive tackles Mike Panasiuk and Raequan Williams

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	30	Tulsa
Sept.	7	Western Michigan
Sept.	14	Arizona State
Sept.	21	at Northwestern
Sept.	28	Indiana
Oct.	5	at Ohio State
Oct.	12	at Wisconsin
Oct.	26	Penn State
Nov.	9	Illinois
Nov.	16	at Michigan
Nov.	23	at Rutgers
Nov.	30	Maryland

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 7-6, 5-4 BIG TEN

Aug.	31	Utah State	W	38-31
Sept.	8	at Arizona State	L	13-16
Sept.	22	at Indiana	W	35-21
Sept.	29	Central Michigan	W	31-20
Oct.	6	Northwestern	L	19-29
Oct.	13	at Penn State	W	21-17
Oct.	20	Michigan	L	7-21
Oct.	27	Purdue	W	23-13
Nov.	3	at Maryland	W	24-3
Nov.	10	Ohio State	L	6-26
Nov.	17	at Nebraska	L	6-9
Nov.	24	Rutgers	W	14-10
Dec.	31	vs. Oregon #	L	6-7

#Redbox Bowl

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	B1G	NATIONAL
Scoring	18.7 ppg	13	126
Rushing	124.8 ypg	13	115
Passing	217.2 ypg	8	78
Total	342.1 ypg	13	117
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**B1G**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	17.2 ppg	1	8
Rushing	77.9 ypg	1	1
Passing	225.2 ypg	8	62
Total	303.2 ypg	3	10
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**B1G**	**NATIONAL**
+1	+0.08	7	57

2019 RECRUITS

1. Devontae Dobbs, OG, Belleville, MI
2. Julian Barnett, CB, Harper Woods, MI
3. Luke Fulton, LB, Poland, OH
4. Michael Fletcher, DE, Flint, MI
5. Tre'Von Morgan, WR, Massillon, OH
6. Spencer Brown, OT, Walled Lake, MI
7. Tre Mosley, WR, West Bloomfield, MI
8. Nick Samac, OG, Mentor, OH
9. Jase Bowen, WR, Northwood, OH
10. Adam Berghorst, DE, Zeeland, MI
11. J.D. Duplain, DL, Strongsville, OH
12. Anthony Williams Jr., RB, Bolingbrook, IL
13. Brandon Wright, RB, Euclid, OH
14. Marcel Lewis, ILB, Clinton Township, MI
15. Tate Hallock, S, Grand Rapids, MI
16. Payton Thorne, QB, Naperville, IL
17. Damon Kaylor, OT, Huntington, IN
18. Maverick Hansen, DT, Farmington Hills, MI
19. Jack Bouwmeester, P, Victoria Australia
20. Evan Morris, K, Elsie, MI

Recruits ranked according to the 247SportsComposite

Bruce Schwartzman

ADVANCED STATS

5 Factors: College Football's Most Important Stats

Field Position[1]		Rank
Offense	28.5	103
Defense	30.1	86
Margin	**-1.6**	**97**
Efficiency[2]		**Rank**
Offense	36.0%	121
Defense	34.3%	8
Margin	**+1.7%**	**60**
Explosiveness[3]		**Rank**
Offense	4.6	126
Defense	4.5	5
Margin	**+0.1**	**74**
Finishing Drives[4]		**Rank**
Offense	3.5	127
Defense	3.2	3
Margin	**+0.3**	**49**
Adjusted TO Margin[5]		**Rank**
Projected	-4.2	106
Actual	1	57
Margin	**+5.2**	**19**

KEY: 1-Average starting field position by yard line; **2**-Rate of successful plays (gaining 50% of necessary yards on 1st down, 70% on 2nd down, 100% on 3rd down); **3**-Explosiveness=yards per play; **4**-Points per trip inside 40-yard line; **5**-TO margin accounting for "luck" • Advanced stats provided by Bill Connelly of SB Nation

NUMBERS TO KNOW

5.2/1.1

Michigan State averaged just 5.2 yards per play on first downs (109th in FBS) and 1.1 gains per game of 30-plus yards (126th). The Spartans had neither efficiency nor explosiveness on which to lean.

2.1

If you hate big plays, State games were for you. While the Spartans averaged just 1.1 gains per game of 30-plus yards, opponents averaged only 1.0 (fourth). These 2.1 explosive plays per game were the fewest in the country.

+5.2

Based on national averages for fumble recovery rates and the ratio of interceptions to passes broken up, Michigan State's turnover margin should have been about minus-4.2, 106th in FBS. Instead, it was plus-1. That 5.2-turnover difference was second luckiest in the Big Ten and 19th in FBS.

rarely yielding an inch inside. Defensive end Kenny Willekes planned to opt for the NFL after being Big Ten Defensive Lineman of the Year, but a broken leg in the Redbox Bowl ended those plans. The high-motored Willekes is expected to be fully recovered after leading the Big Ten in tackles for a loss with 20.5.

Sturdy and tenacious Mike linebacker Joe Bachie was first-team All-Big Ten in 2018 and has started 26 straight games. Tyriq Thompson returns as a dependable strong-side linebacker, and Antjuan Simmons is a proven player, ready to make noise in the slot as the new starter at Star linebacker.

Josiah Scott is Dantonio's next great cornerback, sticky and quick after missing the first eight games of 2018 with a knee injury. Shakur Brown and Josh Butler are proven candidates for the other corner position. David Dowell has two seasons of All-Big Ten play behind him at field safety but has had patches of inconsistency. Sophomore Xavier Henderson is ready to be an impact player as a new starter at strong safety after a year as the nickel back.

SPECIALISTS Placekicker Matt Coghlin was first-team All-Big Ten after going 18-of-22 on field goals with a career long of 49 yards. Jake Hartbarger is a career 42.1-yard punter and will get a sixth year of eligibility after suffering a broken leg early last year.

FINAL ANALYSIS Michigan State's punishing defense will pave the way to Dantonio's 12th bowl appearance. The experienced X-factors on offense will determine whether this will be another seven-win season or yield double-digit wins with an outside shot of contention for Dantonio's fourth Big Ten championship.

Salem, the new offensive coordinator, is in his 10th season on staff after working his way up from running backs coach and quarterbacks coach. The former Division II head coach at Augustana College in South Dakota holds the keys to the new-look Spartans on offense. Critics have wondered for years what it would look like if MSU's stout defense were paired with a modern offense. With good talent in the passing game, the Spartans are a quality offensive line away from becoming a dangerous dark horse in the Big Ten East.

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (9)

WR	**7**	**Cody White (Jr.)**	4	C.J. Hayes (So.)
WR	**25**	**Darrell Stewart Jr. (Sr.)**	13	Laress Nelson (Jr.)
WR	8	Jalen Nailor (So.)	21	Cam Chambers (Jr.)
LT	**61**	**Cole Chewins (Sr.)**	76	AJ Arcuri (Jr.)
LG	62	Luke Campbell (Jr.)	**70**	**Tyler Higby (Sr.)**
C	**64**	**Matt Allen (Jr.)**	66	Blake Bueter (So.)
RG	**75**	**Kevin Jarvis (Jr.)**	56	Matt Carrick (So.)
RT	**55**	**Jordan Reid (Jr.)**	79	Mustafa Khaleefah (So.)
TE	89	Matt Dotson (Jr.)	88	Trenton Gillison (Fr.)
QB	**14**	**Brian Lewerke (Sr.)**	12	Rocky Lombardi (So.)
RB	**11**	**Connor Heyward (Jr.)**	15	La'Darius Jefferson (So.)

DEFENSE (8)

Returning Starters in Bold

DE	**48**	**Kenny Willekes (Sr.)**	91	Jack Camper (So.)
DT	**72**	**Mike Panasiuk (Sr.)**	93	Naquan Jones (Jr.)
DT	**99**	**Raequan Williams (Sr.)**	64	Jacob Slade (Fr.)
DE	**96**	**Jacub Panasiuk (Jr.)**	86	Drew Beesley (Jr.)
OLB	34	Antjuan Simmons (Jr.)	33	Jeslord Boateng (Fr.)
MLB	**35**	**Joe Bachie (Sr.)**	21	Chase Kline (Fr.)
ILB	**17**	**Tyriq Thompson (Sr.)**	26	Brandon Bouyer-Randle (Jr.)
CB	**22**	**Josiah Scott (Jr.)**	29	Shakur Brown (So.)
CB	19	Josh Butler (Sr.)	18	Kalon Gervin (Fr.)
S	**6**	**David Dowell (Sr.)**	24	Tre Person (Jr.)
S	3	Xavier Henderson (So.)	9	Dominique Long (Jr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	4	Matt Coghlin (Jr.)	**KR** 11	Connor Heyward (Jr.)
P	25	Jake Hartbarger (Sr.)	**PR** 8	Jalen Nailor (So.)

2018 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Brian Lewerke	**339**	**184**	**2,040**	**8**	**11**
Rocky Lombardi	**154**	**68**	**738**	**3**	**3**

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD
Connor Heyward	**118**	**529**	**4.5**	**5**
LJ Scott	79	264	3.3	0
La'Darius Jefferson	**78**	**255**	**3.3**	**2**
Brian Lewerke	**90**	**184**	**2.0**	**2**

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Cody White	**42**	**555**	**13.2**	**2**
Darrell Stewart Jr.	**48**	**413**	**8.6**	**1**
Connor Heyward	**32**	**249**	**7.8**	**0**
Felton Davis III	31	474	15.3	4

KICKING: Matt Coghlin, 18-22 FGs, 79 pts.
TACKLES: Joe Bachie, 102; Andrew Dowell, 97
SACKS: Kenny Willekes, 8.5
INTERCEPTIONS: 4 players tied with 2

Returning Players in **Bold**

SCOUTING THE SPARTANS

OPPOSING COACHES SIZE UP MICHIGAN STATE

"This is a program that's never as bad as their record. That being said, the change in the division is starting to show, and they can't dominate when the big three are clicking like they have been. I think at their best MSU is similar to Iowa, but they have better athletes. They're going to work you and grind you like a lot of those West Division teams, and maybe that's the best identity when you're a have-not program in the East. … They play physically on offense; they play mad. They go all in on the chip on your shoulder, from recruiting all the way to game day. … Offensively they're a basic two-back run game, but they've been more creative about trick plays and throwing weird looks at you. But they haven't been as dominant running the football as they have in years past. … They're a little more open offensively than some of the grinder teams, but that's because they pull a little bit better talent at skill positions. The best player on that team was Felton Davis. They've got real athletes at receiver, but he was special. When you take him out of that offense, I don't think they win nearly as many games last year. … They're really good on their defensive line, really good with the defensive backs. Defensively is where they set the tone. … They're still able to compete because they do a great job evaluating and developing."

Ohio State **Buckeyes**

National Forecast: **5** • Big Ten East Prediction: **2** • Projected Record: **11-1, 8-1 Big Ten**

J.K. Dobbins

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Ryan Day
Record at School: 3-0 (interim coach in 2018)
Career Record: 3-0 (interim coach in 2018)
Offensive Coordinator: Kevin Wilson
Defensive Coordinators: Jeff Hafley, Greg Mattison
Location: Columbus, OH
Stadium: Ohio Stadium (104,944)

KEY BUCKEYES

J.K. DOBBINS, RB Believes he endured a sophomore slump last season and is intent on reaching higher ground in 2019.

JORDAN FULLER, S The Buckeyes have a security blanket on the back end of their young and talented defense.

CHASE YOUNG Every time No. 2 puts his hand on the ground and pursues the football, there is potential for a big defensive play.

KEY LOSSES

DWAYNE HASKINS, QB In his one season at the controls, he set records and was a Heisman finalist.

PARRIS CAMPBELL, WR Speedy wideout amassed more than 1,000 yards receiving and a dozen touchdowns in 2018.

NICK BOSA, DE His junior year was cut way short and the defense adjusted; still, the Buckeyes will be without a Bosa on opening day for the first time in seven years.

RISING STAR

Offensive tackle **NICHOLAS PETIT-FRERE** is showing promise as a redshirt freshman. He's not a lock to start but already is squarely in the mix at right tackle, displaying why virtually every recruiting service tabbed him as the nation's top OL prospect in 2018.

At Ohio State, successful eras can stack on top of one another — but that certainly doesn't mean it will be a smooth transition for new boss Ryan Day. After all, Day is now walking in the hallowed footsteps of Urban Meyer, who retired the day after the Rose Bowl win over Washington.

Day inherits an OSU squad that is missing the likes of defensive end Nick Bosa and record-setting quarterback Dwayne Haskins, among other key personnel, but he showed the coaching chops to keep the program on a high plane last year while Meyer served a very public three-game suspension.

Day also has shown that he will go wherever necessary to find coaches who improve his staff. Case in point: the addition of co-defensive coordinator Greg Mattison and linebackers coach Al Washington, who arrived from Michigan.

The newcomer under the largest spotlight, though, is quarterback Justin Fields, who transferred to campus after one season at Georgia. A top-five prospect nationally in the 2018 recruiting class, Fields now has the reins of Day's high-powered offense.

OFFENSE Fields' rocket arm and impressive wheels will have to be on full display for him to even approach the dizzying production of Haskins, who amassed more than 4,800 passing yards and 50 touchdowns while completing 70 percent of his attempts in 2018.

J.K. Dobbins led the Buckeyes in rushing last season with 1,053 yards and 10 scores, but he still was overshadowed at times by Mike Weber, who averaged 5.5 yards a pop and seemed to have more meaningful jaunts in big games. Weber has departed, as has the talented Brian Snead, who has transferred out of the program. Master Teague and Demario McCall will vie for time behind Dobbins; McCall likely has the advantage given his potential as a weapon in the passing game.

The depth, production and consistency of the OSU wide receivers took the offense to new heights last year. Parris Campbell, Johnnie Dixon and Terry McLaurin are gone, but K.J. Hill is back after an 885-yard season. Many others figure to contribute, including Austin Mack, Binjimen Victor and Chris Olave, who exploded with seven catches for 127 yards and three TDs in late wins over Michigan and Northwestern. The depth at tight end is noteworthy, with veterans Rashod Berry, Luke Farrell and Jake Hausmann all back in the fold, and a buzz growing around young Jeremy Ruckert.

Offensive tackles Jamarco Jones and Isaiah Prince have exhausted their eligibility, and center Michael Jordan somewhat surprisingly followed them out the door. That presents some challenges for line coach Greg Studrawa and tempers the outlook for the offense. Still, veterans Thayer Munford and Branden Bowen are ready to lead.

DEFENSE Even with all the talent up front, the Buckeyes allowed foes to rush for 4.5 yards per carry. D-line coach Larry Johnson looks to tighten up his front four, which is now without Bosa and the versatile Dre'Mont

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	Florida Atlantic
Sept.	7	Cincinnati
Sept.	14	at Indiana
Sept.	21	Miami (Ohio)
Sept.	28	at Nebraska
Oct.	5	Michigan State
Oct.	18	at Northwestern
Oct.	26	Wisconsin
Nov.	9	Maryland
Nov.	16	at Rutgers
Nov.	23	Penn State
Nov.	30	at Michigan

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 13-1, 8-1 BIG TEN

Sept.	1	Oregon State	W	77-31
Sept.	8	Rutgers	W	52-3
Sept.	15	vs. TCU #	W	40-28
Sept.	22	Tulane	W	49-6
Sept.	29	at Penn State	W	27-26
Oct.	6	Indiana	W	49-26
Oct.	13	Minnesota	W	30-14
Oct.	20	at Purdue	L	20-49
Nov.	3	Nebraska	W	36-31
Nov.	10	at Michigan State	W	26-6
Nov.	17	at Maryland (ot)	W	52-51
Nov.	24	Michigan	W	62-39
Dec.	1	vs. Northwestern %	W	45-24
Jan.	1	vs. Washington &	W	28-23

#Arlington %Indianapolis &Rose Bowl

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	B1G	NATIONAL
Scoring	42.4 ppg	1	8
Rushing	171.3 ypg	7	63
Passing	364.3 ypg	1	2
Total	535.6 ypg	1	2
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**B1G**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	25.5 ppg	7	50
Rushing	158.2 ypg	6	57
Passing	245.2 ypg	11	86
Total	403.4 ypg	10	71
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**B1G**	**NATIONAL**
+6	+0.43	4	32

2019 RECRUITS

1. Zach Harrison, DE, Lewis Center, OH
2. Garrett Wilson, WR, Austin, TX
3. Harry Miller, C, Buford, GA
4. Jameson Williams, WR, Saint Louis, MO
5. Cade Stover, LB, Mansfield, OH
6. Ronnie Hickman, S, Wayne, NJ
7. Enokk Vimahi, OG, Kahuku, HI
8. Steele Chambers, RB, Roswell, GA
9. Ryan Jacoby, OT, Mentor, OH
10. Tommy Eichenberg, LB, Cleveland, OH
11. Noah Potter, DE, Mentor, OH
12. Marcus Crowley, RB, Jacksonville, FL
13. Bryson Shaw, S, Eldersburg, MD
14. Cormontae Hamilton, TE, Memphis, TN
15. Craig Young, ATH, Fort Wayne, IN
16. Jaden McKenzie, DT, Wake Forest, NC
17. Dawand Jones, OT, Indianapolis, IN

Recruits ranked according to the 247SportsComposite

Tom Lynn

ADVANCED STATS

5 Factors: College Football's Most Important Stats

Field Position[1]		Rank
Offense	31.0	40
Defense	25.1	1
Margin	**+5.9**	**7**

Efficiency[2]		Rank
Offense	49.2%	8
Defense	38.6%	36
Margin	**+10.6%**	**9**

Explosiveness[3]		Rank
Offense	6.6	11
Defense	5.8	72
Margin	**+0.8**	**26**

Finishing Drives[4]		Rank
Offense	5.1	19
Defense	4.3	48
Margin	**+0.8**	**22**

Adjusted TO Margin[5]		Rank
Projected	8.3	7
Actual	6	29
Margin	**-2.3**	**87**

KEY: 1-Average starting field position by yard line; **2**-Rate of successful plays (gaining 50% of necessary yards on 1st down, 70% on 2nd down, 100% on 3rd down); **3**-Explosiveness=yards per play; **4**-Points per trip inside 40-yard line; **5**-TO margin accounting for "luck" • Advanced stats provided by Bill Connelly of SB Nation

NUMBERS TO KNOW

25.5

First-world problems: Ohio State allowed 25.5 points per game in 2018, the most ever for the Buckeyes defense. They hadn't allowed more than 23 points per game since 1999 (23.9).

3.0

If you liked big plays, though, Ohio State games were the best. The Buckeyes averaged 3.0 gains per game of 30-plus yards (13th in FBS) but also allowed 2.8 (110th). The combined 5.8 big plays per game were the most in the conference.

25.1

The Buckeyes defense suffered these glitches despite being gifted the best average field position in the country by the OSU offense and special teams. Opponents' average starting field position was 25.1, a yard further back than anyone else in the conference.

Jones. That sounds daunting, but the Buckeyes still boast plenty of ability at end in Chase Young (9.5 sacks), Jonathon Cooper and Tyreke Smith. The Buckeyes also lured local phenom Zach Harrison, a freak athlete with a lofty ceiling.

The middle of the OSU defense has been a puzzle since Raekown McMillan left a few years ago. Tuf Borland did an adequate job last season but had to overcome an Achilles injury in the off-season. Senior Justin Hilliard was ready to provide lots of help inside and on special teams but suffered the same setback this spring; his injury-plagued career could be over. Malik Harrison, on the other hand, is the mainstay.

Keandre Jones' transfer to Maryland led the coaches to take a long look at placing safety Brendon White at a hybrid outside linebacker spot. The son of former OSU standout William White, Brendon may appear undersized but hits like a truck and emerged as a force in the back seven midway through last season.

In the backfield, Jeffrey Okudah looks to be in shutdown mode, and Damon Arnette, while still inconsistent, is a senior with tons of experience and willingness to enter the fray. Shaun Wade also has proven his worth. Jordan Fuller could have jumped to the NFL but remains as one of the Big Ten's best defenders. The reliable senior tied Harrison for the team lead last year with 81 tackles and also came up with three takeaways.

SPECIALISTS Placekicker Blake Haubeil and punter Drue Chrisman aren't exactly your run-of-the-mill kicking specialists — both stand 6'3" and weigh 220-plus pounds. They also have booming legs, especially Chrisman, who also has displayed uncanny touch with 29 kicks downed inside the 20 last season compared to just one touchback. McCall will try to infuse some excitement into the return game.

FINAL ANALYSIS The offense will feature lots of personnel, a fast tempo and a new signal caller who's a highlight waiting to happen. It will be a thing of beauty when it clicks, but it may take a while given the fact that several linemen still need to settle into a comfort zone. On defense, there's reason to believe the Buckeyes will be troublesome with a capable secondary and plenty of beasts up front. Get ready for an interesting and wild ride.

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (4)

WR	14	K.J. Hill (Sr.)	26	Jaelen Gill (Fr.)
WR	**11**	**Austin Mack (Sr.)**	19	Chris Olave (So.)
WR	9	Binjimen Victor (Sr.)	80	C.J. Saunders (Sr.)
LT	**75**	**Thayer Munford (Jr.)**	74	Max Wray (Fr.)
LG	52	Wyatt Davis (So.)	61	Gavin Cupp (Jr.)
C	71	Josh Myers (So.)		Harry Miller (Fr.)
RG	76	Branden Bowen (Sr.)		Jonah Jackson (Sr.)
RT	58	Joshua Alabi (Sr.)	77	Nicholas Petit-Frere (Fr.)
TE	13	Rashod Berry (Sr.)	**89**	**Luke Farrell (Jr.)**
QB	1	Justin Fields (So.)	4	Chris Chugunov (Sr.)
RB	**2**	**J.K. Dobbins (Jr.)**	30	Demario McCall (Jr.)

DEFENSE (9)

Returning Starters in Bold

DE	11	Tyreke Smith (So.)	**18**	**Jonathon Cooper (Sr.)**
DT	53	Davon Hamilton (Sr.)	9	Jashon Cornell (Sr.)
DT	**67**	**Robert Landers (Sr.)**	72	Tommy Togiai (So.)
DE	**2**	**Chase Young (Jr.)**	33	Zach Harrison (Fr.)
WLB	**39**	**Malik Harrison (Sr.)**		Cade Stover (Fr.)
MLB	**32**	**Tuf Borland (Jr.)**	5	Baron Browning (Jr.)
SLB	25	Brendon White (Jr.)	**20**	**Pete Werner (Jr.)**
CB	**3**	**Damon Arnette (Sr.)**	24	Shaun Wade (So.)
CB	1	Jeffrey Okudah (Jr.)	12	Sevyn Banks (So.)
SS	**4**	**Jordan Fuller (Sr.)**	10	Amir Riep (Jr.)
FS	**14**	**Isaiah Pryor (Jr.)**	23	Jahsen Wint (Jr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	95	Blake Haubeil (Jr.)	KR	30	Demario McCall (Jr.)
P	91	Drue Chrisman (Jr.)	PR	14	K.J. Hill (Sr.)

2018 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Dwayne Haskins	533	373	4,831	50	8
Tate Martell	28	23	269	1	0

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD
J.K. Dobbins	**230**	**1,053**	**4.6**	**10**
Mike Weber	172	954	5.5	5
Tate Martell	22	128	5.8	2
Dwayne Haskins	79	108	1.4	4

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Parris Campbell	90	1,063	11.8	12
K.J. Hill	**70**	**885**	**12.6**	**6**
Johnnie Dixon	42	669	15.9	8
Terry McLaurin	35	701	20.0	11

KICKING: Blake Haubeil, 10-13 FGs, 67 pts.
TACKLES: Jordan Fuller, 81; Malik Harrison, 81
SACKS: Chase Young, 9.5
INTERCEPTIONS: Shaun Wade, 3

Returning Players in **Bold**

SCOUTING THE BUCKEYES

OPPOSING COACHES SIZE UP OHIO STATE

"No one expects this team to take a step back because Urban Meyer left. They showed how good they can be without him. Expect that level of execution from the three-game suspension period. They weren't a different team in terms of what they called — they called the exact same stuff later on — but they had energy. Ryan (Day) was already evolving the play calling before he got the head job. They're really just two hiccups away from the Playoff these last two years, Purdue and Iowa. Those two games are the difference for them making the Playoff back to back. … Defensively, they were good up front, but they didn't have the secondary play last year that you expect from OSU. There's no Marcus Lattimore. There's no Eli Apple. It's a position that's hurt them again and again. The linebacker play is still good but not exceptional. They don't have anyone who can run and close on coverage like a Ryan Shazier. Teams got more and more confident that if you blocked well up front, you could hit them hard downfield. That's what Purdue did. … They're an exceptional offense. When you have a good quarterback and running back, that much speed across the field is impossible to account for. It's not even just downfield speed, it was all the little small routes, too."

Penn State **Nittany Lions**

National Forecast: **14** • Big Ten East Prediction: **3** • Projected Record: **9-3, 6-3 Big Ten**

KJ Hamler

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: James Franklin
Record at School: 45-21 (5 years)
Career Record: 69-36 (8 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Ricky Rahne
Defensive Coordinator: Tim Banks, Brent Pry
Location: University Park, PA
Stadium: Beaver Stadium (106,572)

KEY NITTANY LIONS

KJ HAMLER, WR Led the Nittany Lions with 42 catches for 754 yards; ranked seventh in the Big Ten with a 26.2-yard kickoff return average.

YETUR GROSS-MATOS, DE Enjoyed a breakthrough season, leading the Nittany Lions in tackles for a loss with 20 and sacks with eight.

MICAH PARSONS, OLB Played as a backup to senior Koa Farmer for all but one game of his true freshman season but still led the Nittany Lions in tackles with 83.

KEY LOSSES

TRACE MCSORLEY, QB Penn State's all-time leader in passing yards (9,899), total offense (11,596), TD passes (77), TD runs by a quarterback (30) and victories by a QB (31).

MILES SANDERS, RB Was second in the Big Ten with 1,274 rushing yards in his lone season as a starter.

AMANI ORUWARIYE, CB Intercepted three passes as a senior en route to earning first-team All-Big Ten honors.

RISING STAR

Redshirt sophomore QB **SEAN CLIFFORD** has said that Penn State is "ready to take that next step." If so, the former four-star prospect will have to make a smooth transition into the starting job. His seven career passing attempts include the longest completion in school history — 95 yards.

Penn State is going to look a lot different this year, and the debut of a new starting quarterback to replace record-setting three-year starter Trace McSorley is only the most obvious of the many changes in store.

In addition to their graduation losses, the Nittany Lions saw five starters leave early to enter the NFL Draft, while 11 players entered the transfer portal. Many of the transfers were older backups who had seen their career prospects diminish with the arrival of more highly rated recruiting classes over the past three years. But even so, that's a lot of attrition for one offseason, and James Franklin isn't taking it lightly. "We've got a lot of question marks, obviously, with some of the guys we've lost," he says. "But I also think there's a lot of excitement for the upcoming season."

OFFENSE Projected starting quarterback Tommy Stevens threw Penn State for a loop in April when he entered the transfer portal following spring practice. The fifth-year senior didn't gain a lot of experience backing up the famously durable McSorley for three seasons, but his 41 career passes are 34 more than the team's other four scholarship QBs combined. With Stevens gone, redshirt sophomore Sean Clifford will likely inherit the starting spot. He looked sharp in limited duty as a freshman, throwing for two touchdowns in only seven attempts. But he's still a largely unknown commodity.

Compounding those transitional difficulties, the Lions need young players to step into major roles elsewhere on offense. KJ Hamler got off to a terrific start with 42 catches for 754 yards last year, but the only other returning wideout with more than 10 career catches is another sophomore, Jahan Dotson, who had 13 for 203 yards in 2018. Eight of the team's 12 scholarship receivers will have either freshman or sophomore eligibility this fall. The only upperclassmen are graduate transfers George Campbell (formerly of Florida State) and Weston Carr (formerly of Azusa Pacific), and former walk-ons Isaac Lutz and Dan Chisena, both of whom were put on scholarship in April. One potential breakout player in the passing game is tight end Pat Freiermuth.

The backfield is as young as the receiver corps, with sophomores Ricky Slade, Journey Brown and C.J. Holmes battling true freshmen Noah Cain and Devyn Ford for carries. Slade's 45 rushing attempts last year make him the team's most experienced runner. The speedy Brown has bulked up to 206 pounds and excelled in the spring.

The offensive line has three returning starters but will likely feature a redshirt freshman at left tackle, as Rasheed Walker appears poised to succeed Ryan Bates, an early draft entrant.

DEFENSE Coordinator Brent Pry likes to bring the heat, and he appears to have the personnel to do so again after a 2018 season in which Penn State led the FBS in sacks (3.6 per game) and was fourth in tackles for a loss (8.2 per game). Defensive end Yetur Gross-Matos fin-

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	Idaho
Sept.	7	Buffalo
Sept.	14	Pittsburgh
Sept.	27	at Maryland
Oct.	5	Purdue
Oct.	12	at Iowa
Oct.	19	Michigan
Oct.	26	at Michigan State
Nov.	9	at Minnesota
Nov.	16	Indiana
Nov.	23	at Ohio State
Nov.	30	Rutgers

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 9-4, 6-3 BIG TEN

Sept.	1	Appalachian State (ot)	W	45-38
Sept.	8	at Pittsburgh	W	51-6
Sept.	15	Kent State	W	63-10
Sept.	21	at Illinois	W	63-24
Sept.	29	Ohio State	L	26-27
Oct.	13	Michigan State	L	17-21
Oct.	20	at Indiana	W	33-28
Oct.	27	Iowa	W	30-24
Nov.	3	at Michigan	L	7-42
Nov.	10	Wisconsin	W	22-10
Nov.	17	at Rutgers	W	20-7
Nov.	24	Maryland	W	38-3
Jan.	1	vs. Kentucky #	L	24-27

#Citrus Bowl

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	B1G	NATIONAL
Scoring	33.8 ppg	3	31
Rushing	204.9 ypg	5	29
Passing	218.1 ypg	7	77
Total	423.0 ypg	5	45
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**B1G**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	20.5 ppg	4	23
Rushing	169.0 ypg	8	72
Passing	181.5 ypg	2	15
Total	350.5 ypg	5	34
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**B1G**	**NATIONAL**
-1	-0.08	9	73

2019 RECRUITS

1. Brandon Smith, LB, Louisa, VA
2. Adisa Isaac, DE, Brooklyn, NY
3. Noah Cain, RB, Baton Rouge, LA
4. Lance Dixon, OLB, West Bloomfield, MI
5. Tyler Rudolph, S, Waterbury, CT
6. Te'Quan Roberson, QB, Orange, NJ
7. Anthony Whigan, OT, Lexington Park, MD*
8. Keaton Ellis, CB, State College, PA
9. Brenton Strange, TE, Parkersburg, WV
10. Michael Johnson Jr., QB, Eugene, OR
11. Marquis Wilson, CB, Windsor, CT
12. Devyn Ford, RB, Stafford, VA
13. Caedan Wallace, OG, Robbinsville, NJ
14. John Dunmore, WR, Fort Lauderdale, FL
15. Dvon Ellies, DT, Burtonsville, MD
16. Saleem Wormley, OG, Newark, DE
17. Hakeem Beamon, DE, Midlothian, VA
18. Joey Porter Jr., CB, Wexford, PA
19. Jaquan Brisker, S, Bakersfield, CA*
20. TJ Jones, WR, Lake City, FL
21. Smith Vilbert, DE, Monsey, NY
22. Joseph Appiah Darkwa, DT, North Rhine, Germany
23. Daequan Hardy, CB, Pittsburgh, PA

*junior college transfer

Recruits ranked according to the 247SportsComposite

Getty Images

ADVANCED STATS

5 Factors: College Football's Most Important Stats

Field Position[1]		Rank
Offense	31.4	28
Defense	28.0	32
Margin	**+3.4**	**33**

Efficiency[2]		Rank
Offense	43.1%	56
Defense	37.5%	23
Margin	**+5.6%**	**31**

Explosiveness[3]		Rank
Offense	6.1	38
Defense	4.7	15
Margin	**+1.4**	**13**

Finishing Drives[4]		Rank
Offense	4.7	63
Defense	4.1	33
Margin	**+0.6**	**31**

Adjusted TO Margin[5]		Rank
Projected	4.0	39
Actual	-1	72
Margin	**-5.0**	**114**

KEY: 1-Average starting field position by yard line; **2**-Rate of successful plays (gaining 50% of necessary yards on 1st down, 70% on 2nd down, 100% on 3rd down); **3**-Explosiveness=yards per play; **4**-Points per trip inside 40-yard line; **5**-TO margin accounting for "luck" • Advanced stats provided by Bill Connelly of SB Nation

NUMBERS TO KNOW

1.5

Few defenses prevented big plays as well as Penn State. The Nittany Lions allowed just 1.5 gains per game of 30-plus yards (17th in FBS) and only 2.2 passes per game of 20-plus (ninth).

97

Penn State's passing game grew drastically less efficient in 2018. The Nittany Lions went from 12th in FBS with a 47.3 percent passing success rate (percentage of plays that gained at least 50 percent of necessary yardage on first down, 70 percent on second, or 100 percent on third or fourth) in 2017 to 97th with 37.5 percent last fall.

31

On a nice run: PSU has won 31 games in the last three seasons; the last time the Nittany Lions could top that was 1994-96.

ished with eight sacks and 20 TFLs last year and could be a dominant force. Robert Windsor was a disruptive defensive tackle, totaling 7.5 sacks. The Lions have holes to fill at the other two spots, but they've recruited well at defensive end in recent years, and it won't be surprising if redshirt freshman Jayson Oweh pushes for early playing time.

At linebacker, Micah Parsons appears primed for a big year. The former five-star prospect led the team in tackles with 83 last season despite starting only one game. He's set to jump to the top of the depth chart this year, where he'll join experienced seniors Cam Brown and Jan Johnson to form a solid starting threesome.

The Lions return two veterans in the secondary, with cornerback John Reid and strong safety Garrett Taylor both back. Penn State finished eighth in the country in pass efficiency defense last year. With Tariq Castro-Fields set to join the starting lineup at cornerback, Jonathan Sutherland and Lamont Wade battling for the vacant safety spot opposite Taylor, and a whole lot of pocket-crushing defensive ends set to return, the Lions should be effective against the pass again.

SPECIALISTS After a season marred by special teams gaffes, the Lions have a new coordinator: Joe Lorig, formerly of Memphis. He inherits an excellent punter in senior Blake Gillikin, whose career average (43.3) is the best in school history. The Lions also return placekicker Jake Pinegar, who hit 16-of-24 field goal attempts as a freshman. In addition, Hamler is a dangerous kick returner who averaged 26.2 yards last season.

FINAL ANALYSIS Penn State's recent success has been predicated on offense, but this team may have to lean on its defense while waiting for the young playmakers on the other side of the ball to gain experience. The good news for Franklin is that his defense might just be up to the challenge, with difference-makers such as Gross-Matos and Parsons leading the way. The bad news is that Penn State still plays in the rugged Big Ten East Division, where its abundant youth on offense is not likely to go unexploited. The Lions are building something after bringing in three consecutive recruiting classes that have ranked among the country's top dozen. But this project may not be complete in 2019.

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (5)

WR	**1**	**KJ Hamler (So.)**	12	Mac Hippenhammer (So.)
WR	5	Jahan Dotson (So.)	11	Daniel George (Fr.)
WR	6	Justin Shorter (Fr.)	81	Cam Sullivan-Brown (So.)
LT	53	Rasheed Walker (Fr.)	75	Des Holmes (So.)
LG	**74**	**Steven Gonzalez (Sr.)**	72	Bryce Effner (Fr.)
C	**62**	**Michal Menet (Jr.)**	70	Juice Scruggs (Fr.)
RG	69	C.J. Thorpe (So.)	73	Mike Miranda (So.)
RT	**71**	**Will Fries (Jr.)**	55	Anthony Whigan (Jr.)
TE	**87**	**Pat Freiermuth (So.)**	83	Nick Bowers (Sr.)
QB	14	Sean Clifford (So.)	7	Will Levis (Fr.)
RB	3	Ricky Slade (So.)	4	Journey Brown (So.)

DEFENSE (6)

Returning Starters in Bold

DE	**99**	**Yetur Gross-Matos (Jr.)**	49	Daniel Joseph (Jr.)
DT	**54**	**Robert Windsor (Sr.)**	53	Fred Hansard (So.)
DT	55	Antonio Shelton (Jr.)	93	PJ Mustipher (So.)
DE	18	Shaka Toney (Jr.)	34	Shane Simmons (Jr.)
OLB	**6**	**Cam Brown (Sr.)**	45	Charlie Katshir (Fr.)
ILB	**36**	**Jan Johnson (Sr.)**	13	Ellis Brooks (So.)
OLB	11	Micah Parsons (So.)	40	Jesse Luketa (So.)
CB	5	Tariq Castro-Fields (Jr.)	24	DJ Brown (So.)
CB	**29**	**John Reid (Sr.)**	2	Keaton Ellis (Fr.)
SS	**17**	**Garrett Taylor (Sr.)**	16	John Petrishen (Sr.)
FS	26	Jonathan Sutherland (So.)	38	Lamont Wade (Jr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	92	Jake Pinegar (So.)	**KR**	1	KJ Hamler (So.)
P	93	Blake Gillikin (Sr.)	**PR**	1	KJ Hamler (So.)

2018 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Trace McSorley	361	192	2,530	18	7
Tommy Stevens	11	8	110	1	1
Sean Clifford	**7**	**5**	**195**	**2**	**0**

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD
Miles Sanders	220	1,274	5.8	9
Trace McSorley	170	798	4.7	12
Ricky Slade	**45**	**257**	**5.7**	**6**
Tommy Stevens	28	118	4.2	2

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
KJ Hamler	**42**	**754**	**18.0**	**5**
Pat Freiermuth	**26**	**368**	**14.2**	**8**
Juwan Johnson	25	352	14.1	1

KICKING: **Jake Pinegar, 16-24 FGs, 101 pts.**
TACKLES: **Micah Parsons, 83; Jan Johnson, 72**
SACKS: **Yetur Gross-Matos, 8.0**
INTERCEPTIONS: Three players tied with 3

Returning Players in **Bold**

SCOUTING THE NITTANY LIONS

OPPOSING COACHES SIZE UP PENN STATE

"They're set to take that next big step, not this year because they're replacing a lot of the star power from last year, but in the coming seasons they could be special. They've had a ton of talent cycle through, and that's helped them in recruiting so much, to point to Saquon (Barkley) or Trace (McSorley). Trace was just a flat-out winner. Maybe the most respected QB in the conference, a coach's player. It's a huge void they have to fill on the field and in the leadership position, and James Franklin is drilling that home. They're going to run the ball more, but they'll have to be creative doing it. … When you watch their offense, they do a really good job exploiting the mismatches. They're not overly complicated, but they're smart. They adjust really well on offense; they're reading you early on so you have to change up what you're doing a lot against them. … They lose some at every position on defense, but (DC) Brent Pry has done a great job with their personnel. They're more athletic in their front seven than Penn State ever has been but have a lot of youth. … They've recruited so well that the gaps in replacing guys are getting shorter and shorter. They don't look like Ohio State right now, but they've got freshman and sophomores who do."

Rutgers **Scarlet Knights**

National Forecast: **107** • Big Ten East Prediction: **7** • Projected Record: **2-10, 0-9 Big Ten**

Damon Hayes

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Chris Ash
Record at School: 7-29 (3 years)
Career Record: 7-29 (3 years)
Offensive Coordinator: John McNulty
Defensive Coordinators: Andy Buh, Noah Joseph
Location: New Brunswick, NJ
Stadium: HighPoint.com Stadium (52,454)

KEY SCARLET KNIGHTS

RAHEEM BLACKSHEAR, RB First Rutgers player in 33 years to lead the team in both rushing (586) and receiving (367) yards.

AVERY YOUNG, CB Led the secondary with 67 tackles overall, in addition to breaking up 10 passes as a true freshman.

MICHAEL MAIETTI, C An under-the-radar recruit, Maietti is in line to be a rare four-year starter along the offensive line after starting all 12 games as a redshirt sophomore.

KEY LOSSES

TREVOR MORRIS, LB Ninth in school history with 335 tackles after playing all 48 games at the weak-side spot the past four seasons.

SAQUAN HAMPTON, DB Earned the team MVP award after tying for the Big Ten lead and ranking 12th nationally with 16 passes defended.

ISAIAH WHARTON, CB Became the first Rutgers player in 10 years to start every game over his four-year career.

RISING STAR

After finishing second on the team with 910 all-purpose yards as a true freshman, **ISAIH PACHECO** is expected to garner a bigger piece of the offensive pie. The sophomore running back enjoyed a breakthrough moment vs. Michigan, ripping off an 80-yard touchdown run.

Heading into his third campaign last summer, Rutgers coach Chris Ash told anyone willing to listen that he expected his Scarlet Knights to contend for the bowl berth that had eluded his program since 2014. It didn't happen. A string of arrests resulted in the suspension or dismissal of nine players, and then an offense that featured a freshman quarterback produced historically poor results as Rutgers staggered to a 1–11 finish — its worst record since 2002. By late November, the season had gotten so ugly that the school's athletics director, Pat Hobbs, felt compelled to issue a vote of confidence for Ash, who was widely perceived to be on the hot seat despite being owed $9.8 million through 2022. One thing is clear: Ash will be under intense scrutiny from a disappointed fan base.

OFFENSE Since Ash took over in 2016, Rutgers' scoring offense has ranked 127th in 2016 (15.7 ppg), 121st in 2017 (18.0 ppg) and 130th (13.5 ppg) last season. Any hope for the Scarlet Knights to turn it around in Ash's fourth campaign rests on the shoulders of Artur Sitkowski, who ranked last out of 113 quarterbacks nationally in pass efficiency rating (76.4).

Now a sophomore, Sitkowski will need to cut down on his interceptions — a nation-worst 18 — and improve his accuracy (49.1 completion percentage) for the Scarlet Knights to be competitive in their second season under the direction of offensive coordinator John McNulty.

"We have to get better [at] everything," McNulty says. "When you were 1–11 and we were where we were ranked [offensively] … we need to improve."

To that end, McNulty has stressed improving in third down efficiency after ranking 124th nationally last season. Another area of concern for Rutgers' play caller is big-play production after Rutgers ranked last nationally in offensive plays of 10 yards or longer and next to last in plays of 20 and 30 yards or longer.

The Scarlet Knights' bread and butter will be the run game, which will lean heavily on junior Raheem Blackshear (586 rushing yards) and sophomore Isaih Pacheco (551 rushing yards). "We'll be explosive with the run game," McNulty says. "I'm not as worried about that."

Dropped passes, the inability of receivers to get separation and subpar pass protection were issues as well, but Rutgers returns four of its top five pass catchers and three offensive linemen who started at least five games in 2018.

"It's a team offense, and we've got to have all 11 doing their job to be successful in the run game and in the pass game," Ash says. "Art has to play better. If we're going to have a chance to be successful as a football program, we have to have consistent quarterback play. But to get that, we have to have consistent O-line play, and we have to have consistent wide receiver and tight end play. All those pieces have to work together."

DEFENSE A defensive coach by trade, Ash wasn't satisfied with his team's play last season and went out and tapped former Maryland defensive coordinator Andy

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	30	Massachusetts
Sept.	7	at Iowa
Sept.	21	Boston College
Sept.	28	at Michigan
Oct.	5	Maryland
Oct.	12	at Indiana
Oct.	19	Minnesota
Oct.	26	Liberty
Nov.	2	at Illinois
Nov.	16	Ohio State
Nov.	23	Michigan State
Nov.	30	at Penn State

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 1-11, 0-9 BIG TEN

Sept.	1	Texas State	W	35-7
Sept.	8	at Ohio State	L	3-52
Sept.	15	at Kansas	L	14-55
Sept.	22	Buffalo	L	13-42
Sept.	29	Indiana	L	17-24
Oct.	6	Illinois	L	17-38
Oct.	13	at Maryland	L	7-34
Oct.	20	Northwestern	L	15-18
Nov.	3	at Wisconsin	L	17-31
Nov.	10	Michigan	L	7-42
Nov.	17	Penn State	L	7-20
Nov.	24	at Michigan State	L	10-14

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	B1G	NATIONAL
Scoring	13.5 ppg	14	130
Rushing	134.1 ypg	12	106
Passing	132.2 ypg	14	124
Total	266.3 ypg	14	128
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**B1G**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	31.4 ppg	13	89
Rushing	214.8 ypg	13	108
Passing	186.7 ypg	4	19
Total	401.5 ypg	9	69
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**B1G**	**NATIONAL**
-14	-1.17	14	127

2019 RECRUITS

1. Aaron Young, RB, Coatesville, PA
2. Kay'Ron Adams, RB, Warren, OH
3. Zukudo Igwenagu, LB, Auburn, MA
4. Donald Williams, S, Camden, NJ
5. Stanley King, WR, Camden, NJ
6. Donovan Bunch, CB, Sicklerville, NJ
7. Mohamed Toure, LB, Pleasantville, NJ
8. Isaiah Washington, WR, Jacksonville, FL
9. Rayyan Buell, DT, Hornell, NY
10. Devin Baldwin, DE, Southfield, MI
11. TJ Robinson, S, Riverview, FL
12. Juwan Mitchell, LB, Middletown, NJ*
13. Malachi Burby, DT, Berlin, CT
14. CJ Hanson, OG, Holmdel, NJ
15. Cole Snyder, QB, Lakewood, NY
16. Anton Oskarsson, OT, Kumala, Sweden
17. Omari Cooper, OT, San Diego, CA*
18. Chris Conti, LB, Wycoff, NJ
19. Darius Gooden, CB, Newark, NJ
20. Monterio Hunt, WR, Walnut, MS*

*junior college transfer

Recruits ranked according to the 247SportsComposite

Harrison McClary

ADVANCED STATS

5 Factors: College Football's Most Important Stats

Field Position[1]		Rank
Offense	25.8	129
Defense	31.7	111
Margin	**-5.9**	**124**

Efficiency[2]		Rank
Offense	28.8%	130
Defense	43.2%	86
Margin	**-14.4%**	**129**

Explosiveness[3]		Rank
Offense	4.1	128
Defense	5.7	69
Margin	**-1.6**	**124**

Finishing Drives[4]		Rank
Offense	3.5	128
Defense	5.0	105
Margin	**-1.5**	**129**

Adjusted TO Margin[5]		Rank
Projected	-3.9	104
Actual	-14	127
Margin	**-10.1**	**128**

KEY: 1-Average starting field position by yard line; **2**-Rate of successful plays (gaining 50% of necessary yards on 1st down, 70% on 2nd down, 100% on 3rd down); **3**-Explosiveness=yards per play; **4**-Points per trip inside 40-yard line; **5**-TO margin accounting for "luck" • Advanced stats provided by Bill Connelly of SB Nation

NUMBERS TO KNOW

28.8

Rutgers' offensive success rate (percentage of plays that gained at least 50 percent of necessary yardage on first down, 70 percent on second, or 100 percent on third or fourth) was a ghastly 28.8 percent, worst in all of FBS.

-10.1

There's nothing worse than being bad and unlucky. Based on national averages for fumble recovery rates and the ratio of interceptions to passes broken up, Rutgers' turnover margin should have been about minus-3.9. Instead, it was minus-14. That 10.1-turnover difference was the third-most unlucky in the country.

55.6

Rutgers' pass defense was downright solid, allowing a completion rate of just 55.6 percent, 29th in FBS. The next step in this progression: forcing opponents to actually have to pass more.

Buh for the same position on his squad. The two worked together as assistants on the Wisconsin staff earlier this decade, and they spent the spring tweaking a defense that ranked 89th nationally in points allowed (31.4 ppg.) last season.

Ash likes the unit's depth at linebacker and in the defensive backfield. The latter position group will be led by senior Damon Hayes, who moves back to his natural cornerback spot after starting all 12 games last season at safety, and sophomore Avery Young, who exceeded expectations after being pressed into starting duty in Week 2.

"We're not going to wholesale-change the scheme," says Buh, who has served as the defensive play caller at Stanford, Nevada, California and Maryland in a coaching career that has spanned more than two decades. "Obviously there will be some wrinkles that we'll bring in to just add to the package here. But for the most part just getting the guys to play hard, concentrate on getting the ball out and that's about it."

SPECIALISTS Justin Davidovicz was a pleasant surprise in his first season handling both the kickoff and placekicking duties, drilling 9-of-11 fieldgoal attempts, including a 52-yarder. Adam Korsak, a rugby-style punter from Australia, helped Rutgers rank fourth in the conference in net punting average (40.6). Young and Pacheco will likely be Rutgers' primary returners on punts and kickoffs.

FINAL ANALYSIS While Ash inherited a downtrodden program that would be hit with a two-year probation by the NCAA, patience is clearly wearing thin after a three-year tenure that has included a 7–29 overall record and a 3–24 mark in Big Ten play. The hope is that stability on offense — McNulty is the first offensive coordinator in a decade to return for his second season — and the development of a roster comprised mostly of Ash's recruits will result in a turnaround this fall.

Does the turnaround need to be dramatic in order for Ash to get a fifth season? No one knows for sure, but keep in mind that Ash will still be owed $7.5 million after this season, and he has a boss in Hobbs who wants him to succeed.

"I love the team," Ash says. "They just show up every single day to work. And we're getting better. That's how I feel about our team right now."

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (6)

WR	18	**Bo Melton (Jr.)**	21	Eddie Lewis (So.)
WR	15	**Shameen Jones (So.)**	6	Mohamed Jabbie (Jr.)
WR	85	Daevon Robinson (So.)	7	Hunter Hayek (Jr.)
LT	71	Raiqwon O'Neal (Fr.)	61	Mike Lonsdorf (Jr.)
LG	75	Zach Venesky (Sr.)	77	Sam Vretman (Jr.)
C	55	**Michael Maietti (Jr.)**	74	Sam Howson (Jr.)
RG	66	Nick Krimin (Jr.)	76	Matt Rosso (Fr.)
RT	54	**Kamaal Seymour (Sr.)**	70	Reggie Sutton (Fr.)
TE	11	Johnathan Lewis (So.)		Matt Alaimo (Fr.)
QB	8	**Artur Sitkowski (So.)**	14	Cole Snyder (Fr.)
RB	2	**Raheem Blackshear (Jr.)**	10	Isaih Pacheco (So.)

DEFENSE (5)

Returning Starters in Bold

DE	97	Mike Tverdov (So.)	26	C.J. Onyechi (So.)
DT	96	Willington Previlon (Sr.)	56	Micah Clark (So.)
DT	50	**Julius Turner (Jr.)**	57	Jaohne Duggan (So.)
DE	7	**Elorm Lumor (Jr.)**	49	Nihym Anderson (Fr.)
OLB	3	Olakunle Fatukasi (Jr.)	11	Drew Singleton (So.)
MLB	8	Tyshon Fogg (Jr.)	6	Rashawn Battle (Jr.)
OLB	9	**Tyreek Maddox-Williams (Jr.)**	13	Deion Jennings (Fr.)
CB	2	**Avery Young (So.)**	4	Tre Avery (Jr.)
CB	22	**Damon Hayes (Sr.)**	25	Jarrett Paul (So.)
S	21	Tim Barrow (So.)	15	Malik Dixon (Sr.)
S	12	Christian Izien (Fr.)	24	Naijee Jones (So.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	95	Justin Davidovicz (Jr.)	KR	10	Isaih Pacheco (So.)
P	94	Adam Korsak (Jr.)	PR	2	Avery Young (So.)

2018 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Artur Sitkowski	**273**	**134**	**1,158**	**4**	**18**
Giovanni Rescigno	74	35	370	1	3

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD
Raheem Blackshear	**143**	**586**	**4.1**	**3**
Isaih Pacheco	**111**	**551**	**5.0**	**3**
Jonathan Hilliman	83	337	4.1	6
Giovanni Rescigno	32	110	3.4	0

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Raheem Blackshear	**44**	**367**	**8.3**	**2**
Bo Melton	**28**	**245**	**8.8**	**0**
Eddie Lewis	**24**	**173**	**7.2**	**0**
Travis Vokolek	16	184	11.5	2

KICKING: **Justin Davidovicz, 9-11 FGs, 44 pts.**
TACKLES: Trevor Morris, 109; Deonte Roberts, 87
SACKS: **Elorm Lumor, 4.0; Mike Tverdov, 4.0**
INTERCEPTIONS: Saquan Hampton, 3

Returning Players in **Bold**

SCOUTING THE SCARLET KNIGHTS

OPPOSING COACHES SIZE UP RUTGERS

"It's still scary there. They competed pretty well down the stretch last season, but they're struggling because of personnel. You can't hide that in this league. Their defense gave them a chance here and there, but they can't score points. … Offensively, they're pretty creative; they're trying to manufacture yards as best as they can. But it's just not there with talent. The freshman quarterback (Artur Sitkowski) threw a lot of picks, but he has a lot of raw arm talent. You can live with the mistakes now, because if it clicks for him, he can change everything for them. They have to improve at that position, because there are athletes on the outside. They just can't get the ball to them. The offensive line doesn't look like or execute like a Big Ten line. They need to get fundamentally better if they're going to have any kind of shot. … Defensively, they've been decent in spots but wear down because of depth. … You have to create your own juice there. It's not the Ray Rice Rutgers where they would be a wild crowd and the team was physical. It's kind of flat, sometimes it's hard to get your own guys going when you play there. … They've been recruiting more against MAC schools than anyone else in the Big Ten. Right now they're struggling to shake the losing culture. They aren't in most of the battles in their backyard."

Illinois **Fighting Illini**

National Forecast: **92** • Big Ten West Prediction: **7** • Projected Record: **4-8, 1-8 Big Ten**

Reggie Corbin

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Lovie Smith
Record at School: 9-27 (3 years)
Career Record: 9-27 (3 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Rod Smith
Defensive Coordinator: Lovie Smith
Location: Champaign, IL
Stadium: Memorial Stadium (60,670)

KEY FIGHTING ILLINI

REGGIE CORBIN, RB After limited duty in 2017 (18 carries for 78 yards), he became the school's first 1,000-yard rusher (1,085) since 2010.

ALEX PALCZEWSKI, OT Two-year starter is one of four returnees up front working for first-year position coach Bob McClain.

BOBBY ROUNDTREE, DE Two-year starter led the team with 7.5 sacks, 12.5 tackles for a loss and seven PBUs.

KEY LOSSES

NICK ALLEGRETTI, OG Three-year starter and two-time captain leaves huge holes to fill in terms of leadership and ability.

CHASE MCLAUGHLIN, PK Texan was solid as a rock, earning Big Ten Kicker of the Year honors after hitting 20-of-25 field goal tries.

AJ BUSH JR., QB Graduate transfer from Virginia Tech quickly moved into the starting role during his one season in Champaign.

RISING STAR

Linebacker **MILO EIFLER** is finally good to go after sitting out the 2018 season following his transfer from Washington. The year off gave him time to heal up from shoulder surgery while also learning Lovie Smith's defense. He takes the place of departed Del'Shawn Phillips, who tied for the team lead in tackles.

There hasn't been a bowl bid for Illinois in five seasons. The last winning record came in 2011. The players have had enough.

"I'm sick of losing," says starting center Doug Kramer, who joined the team in 2016.

He looks forward to better days. To a time when Illinois is relevant in the Big Ten West. "What's happened in the past stays in the past," Kramer says. "It's time to move on. We're ready to get going in this next season and win a lot of games."

In his third campaign, Lovie Smith won the most games (four) of his tenure. But he still fell short of a postseason berth.

Going into Year 4, it's the best Kramer has felt about the team's prospects. "Absolutely," he says.

OFFENSE The biggest question: Who plays quarterback? Sophomore M.J. Rivers II gained starting experience as a freshman and seemed to take control of the job during spring practice. But don't count out Matt Robinson, one of three quarterback signees in 2018. Both Rivers and Robinson will face a training camp fight from incoming freshman Isaiah Williams, who has the skill set offensive coordinator Rod Smith craves. A speedy playmaker with a strong arm, Williams presents a two-dimensional quandary for opponents.

Good news for whoever wins the job: Tailback Reggie Corbin returns after a big junior season. He became the first Illini since Mikel Leshoure in 2010 to top 1,000 yards. Corbin, who considered an early move to the NFL, enters the season in the best shape of his life.

He will work behind an offensive line that returns four starters. The best of the bunch is tackle Alex Palczewski, an All-Big Ten candidate. The lone vacancy in the line is expected to be filled by Alabama transfer Richie Petitbon, who joined impressed the coaches in the spring.

Receiver remains a concern. Leading returnee Ricky Smalling caught only 33 passes. One option will be to use incoming freshman Marquez Beason on both offense and defense. A skilled defender, Beason also has the attention of Rod Smith, who is looking for more game-breakers in his offense. The Illini will be looking for an immediate contribution from two grad transfers — Trevon Sidney, a former four-star recruit who arrives from USC, and Dejon Brissett from Richmond.

The Illini suffered a setback in late April when tight end Luke Ford, a transfer from Georgia, was denied immediate eligibility.

DEFENSE A year after changing his offensive coordinator, Lovie Smith made a move on defense. What hotshot coach did Smith pick as his new coordinator? Well, himself. "As a head football coach, I have always been involved," Smith says. "I like the coaching part. I don't think that has to stop when you become head football coach."

He added two new assistants to the defensive side, including his son Miles, who will work with the linebackers.

The Illini have major work to do in all facets after ranking near the bottom nationally in several statistical

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	Akron
Sept.	7	at Connecticut
Sept.	14	Eastern Michigan
Sept.	21	Nebraska
Oct.	5	at Minnesota
Oct.	12	Michigan
Oct.	19	Wisconsin
Oct.	26	at Purdue
Nov.	2	Rutgers
Nov.	9	at Michigan State
Nov.	23	at Iowa
Nov.	30	Northwestern

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 4-8, 2-7 BIG TEN

Sept.	1	Kent State	W	31-24
Sept.	8	Western Illinois	W	34-14
Sept.	15	vs. South Florida #	L	19-25
Sept.	21	Penn State	L	24-63
Oct.	6	at Rutgers	W	38-17
Oct.	13	Purdue	L	7-46
Oct.	20	at Wisconsin	L	20-49
Oct.	27	at Maryland	L	33-63
Nov.	3	Minnesota	W	55-31
Nov.	10	at Nebraska	L	35-54
Nov.	17	Iowa	L	0-63
Nov.	24	at Northwestern	L	16-24

#Chicago

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	B1G	NATIONAL
Scoring	26.0 ppg	11	93
Rushing	243.0 ypg	2	12
Passing	165.7 ypg	11	115
Total	408.7 ypg	8	63
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**B1G**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	39.4 ppg	14	124
Rushing	245.3 ypg	14	122
Passing	263.1 ypg	13	114
Total	508.3 ypg	14	128
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**B1G**	**NATIONAL**
-4	-0.33	12	91

2019 RECRUITS

1. Marquez Beason, DB, Duncanville, TX
2. Isaiah Williams, QB, Saint Louis, MO
3. Shammond Cooper, LB, Saint Louis, MO
4. Moses Okpala, DE, Saint Louis, MO
5. Keith Randolph, DE, Belleville, IL
6. Seth Coleman, DE, Melbourne, FL
7. Kyron Cumby, RB, Plano, TX
8. Joseph Thompson, CB, Chicago, IL
9. Tarique Barnes, LB, Memphis, TN
10. Evan Kirts, OT, Evergreen Park, IL
11. Nick Fedanzo, RB, Lombard, IL
12. Casey Washington, WR, Pflugerville, TX
13. Griffin Moore, TE, Bloomington, IL

Recruits ranked according to the 247SportsComposite

Joe Robbins

ADVANCED STATS

5 Factors: College Football's Most Important Stats

Field Position[1]		Rank
Offense	29.5	77
Defense	29.4	67
Margin	**+0.1**	**70**

Efficiency[2]		Rank
Offense	43.1%	57
Defense	49.3%	124
Margin	**-6.2%**	**109**

Explosiveness[3]		Rank
Offense	6.0	51
Defense	7.0	126
Margin	**-1.0**	**112**

Finishing Drives[4]		Rank
Offense	4.7	59
Defense	5.1	113
Margin	**-0.4**	**99**

Adjusted TO Margin[5]		Rank
Projected	-4.0	105
Actual	-4	89
Margin	**0.0**	**63**

KEY: 1-Average starting field position by yard line; **2**-Rate of successful plays (gaining 50% of necessary yards on 1st down, 70% on 2nd down, 100% on 3rd down); **3**-Explosiveness=yards per play; **4**-Points per trip inside 40-yard line; **5**-TO margin accounting for "luck" • Advanced stats provided by Bill Connelly of SB Nation

NUMBERS TO KNOW

55

Illinois rushers gained at least four yards on 55 percent of their non-sack carries (eighth in FBS), and last year's top four backs combined to average 6.6 yards per carry.

49.3

Illinois' ground game would have made more of a difference if the defense could stop anyone. The Illini allowed a 49.3 percent success rate (percentage of plays that gained at least 50 percent of necessary yardage on first down, 70 percent on second, or 100 percent on third or fourth), 124th in FBS and worst in the Big Ten.

4.3

Big plays were an issue for the defense, too. Illinois allowed 4.3 passes per game of 20-plus yards, 119th in FBS. The offense, meanwhile, averaged just 2.1 (117th).

categories. They were 122nd against the run, 124th in points allowed and 128th in yards allowed. Not good numbers for a coach who built his reputation on defense.

"We played about as bad a defense as you could play in college football," Smith says. "Guys realize that. We bring that up daily. We are embracing what happened last year to make us better."

The strength of the unit is up front. End Bobby Roundtree enters his third season as a starter and is looking to improve his team-high sack total. The Illini expect an immediate contribution from grad transfer Oluwole Betiku, a former five-star recruit who began his career at USC. Tackles Tymir Oliver and Jamal Milan anchor the inside.

Linebackers Milo Eifler and Jake Hansen should lead the team in tackles. The secondary is long on experience, led by safeties Tony Adams and Stanley Green and cornerback Nate Hobbs.

Overall talent on the defense has improved, which is encouraging to Smith.

"We've had too big a drop-off with injuries around here," he says. "Now, we're getting to the point where that depth can really help us go through some of those times."

SPECIALISTS The Illini will miss All-Big Ten kicker Chase McLaughlin. Caleb Griffin, from nearby Danville, Ill., is the likely replacement. Australian punter Blake Hayes has been one of the team's top weapons his first two seasons. Backup running back Dre Brown will work again as kick returner.

FINAL ANALYSIS Despite winning only nine games in his first three years, Smith's job is not in danger. After the 2018 season, the school added two years to the end of his original six-year deal. Still, Smith is growing impatient with the lack of success. Most of the staff has turned over, with just two remaining from his original hires.

With a soft nonconference schedule, the team will need to win one-third of its nine conference games to reach a bowl. Doable? Definitely. Guaranteed? Hardly. Smith remains optimistic, due in part to changes he made on his staff. "We've been around ball long enough to know when something good is getting ready to happen," he says. "The coaching staff is part of that and why I know it's a different day for Illinois football."

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (6)

WR	4	**Ricky Smalling (Jr.)**		Marquez Beason (Fr.)
WR	6	Dominic Stampley (Jr.)	15	Trenard Davis (Sr.)
WR		Trevon Sidney (Jr.)		Dejon Brissett (Sr.)
LT	79	**Vederian Lowe (Jr.)**	73	Jake Cerny (Jr.)
LG	53	**Kendrick Green (So.)**	66	Jordyn Slaughter (Fr.)
C	65	**Doug Kramer (Jr.)**	75	Kurt Gavin (Jr.)
RG	74	Richie Petitbon (Sr.)	72	Kievan Myers (Fr.)
RT	63	**Alex Palczewski (Jr.)**	54	Julian Pearl (Fr.)
TE	87	Daniel Barker (So.)	83	Bobby Walker (Sr.)
QB	8	M.J. Rivers II (So.)		Isaiah Williams (Fr.)
RB	2	**Reggie Corbin (Sr.)**	26	Mike Epstein (Jr.)

DEFENSE (9)

Returning Starters in Bold

DE	97	**Bobby Roundtree (Jr.)**		Oluwole Betiku (Jr.)
DT	96	**Tymir Oliver (Sr.)**	93	Calvin Avery (So.)
DT	55	**Jamal Milan (Sr.)**	90	Lere Oladipo (So.)
DE	99	**Owen Carney Jr. (Jr.)**	92	Isaiah Gay (Jr.)
WLB	35	**Jake Hansen (Jr.)**	45	Khalan Tolson (So.)
MLB	5	Milo Eifler (Jr.)		Shammond Cooper (Fr.)
SLB	9	Dele Harding (Sr.)	10	James Knight (Jr.)
CB	21	**Jartavius Martin (So.)**	20	Nick Walker (Jr.)
CB	8	**Nate Hobbs (Jr.)**	22	Dylan Wyatt (So.)
S	6	Tony Adams (Jr.)	25	Kerby Joseph (So.)
S	30	**Sydney Brown (So.)**	7	**Stanley Green (Sr.)**

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	38	Caleb Griffin (Fr.)	KR	25	Dre Brown (Sr.)
P	14	Blake Hayes (Jr.)	PR	11	Carlos Sandy (So.)

2018 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
AJ Bush Jr.	217	117	1,413	6	10
M.J. Rivers II	101	56	547	3	3

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD
Reggie Corbin	128	1,085	8.5	9
AJ Bush Jr.	138	733	5.3	8
Mike Epstein	60	411	6.9	3
Ra'Von Banner	72	395	5.5	3

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Ricky Smalling	33	406	12.3	5
Trenard Davis	30	278	9.3	0
Sam Mays	29	331	11.4	0
Dominic Stampley	19	311	16.4	2

KICKING: Chase McLaughlin, 20-25 FGs, 96 pts.

TACKLES: **Jake Hansen, 95;** Del'Shawn Phillips, 95

SACKS: **Bobby Roundtree, 7.5**

INTERCEPTIONS: Del'Shawn Phillips, 4

Returning Players in **Bold**

SCOUTING THE FIGHTING ILLINI

OPPOSING COACHES SIZE UP ILLINOIS

"They've struggled a lot the last couple years, but there's a good chance they turn it around and put up a winning season soon. This isn't a Rutgers or Maryland type deal. You can watch their tape and see what they want to do. They've just been outmatched almost everywhere. … Offensively, you're going to get a lot of spread run game. They've shifted what they're doing. We were really impressed with how they run the football. They didn't have what you could consider to be a 'dynamic' back like you see in this league, but they have a really sound attack. And all of them are back this year. That's probably where they're the deepest. The line works very well together, good planning, good execution there. … Defensively, they're fairly simple. Lovie (Smith) comes from an NFL background — it's a lot of man coverage or Cover-2. They'll switch it up a little bit, but it's been easy to figure them out. It's easy to figure out what you want to run against them, because they're not going to get exotic, and they don't have the personnel to challenge you one on one. … For as bad as they've been, they've done a really good job recruiting too. The school is committed to a really long-term rebuild with Lovie; you don't really see that much at our level."

Iowa **Hawkeyes**

National Forecast: **18** • Big Ten West Prediction: **2** • Projected Record: **9-3, 6-3 Big Ten**

Nate Stanley

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Kirk Ferentz
Record at School: 152-101 (20 years)
Career Record: 164-122 (23 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Brian Ferentz
Defensive Coordinator: Phil Parker
Location: Iowa City, IA
Stadium: Kinnick Stadium (70,585)

KEY HAWKEYES

NATE STANLEY, QB His career totals include 5,351 passing yards and 52 touchdown passes.

ALARIC JACKSON, OT On course to leave as a four-year starter at tackle, but also projects high in the 2020 NFL Draft as a junior.

A.J. EPENESA, DE Led the Big Ten last season with 10.5 sacks despite not starting a game. Should be in the hunt for All-America honors in 2019.

KEY LOSSES

T.J. HOCKENSON, TE Won the John Mackey Award as the nation's top collegiate tight end last season before bolting for the NFL Draft.

NOAH FANT, TE Posted a combined 18 TD receptions as a sophomore and junior, though his production dipped late in the 2018 season.

AMANI HOOKER, S Named Big Ten Defensive Back of the Year as a junior last season and joined Hockenson and Fant as early entrants into the NFL Draft.

RISING STAR

Iowa is searching for a replacement for Nick Easley at slot receiver, and redshirt freshman **TYRONE TRACY JR.** emerged as one of the leading candidates in spring practice. Tracy appeared in four games last season but was able to maintain his eligibility under the new redshirt rule.

Kirk Ferentz is heading into uncharted territory as he enters his 21st season as head coach. Ferentz is surpassing the legendary Hayden Fry in longevity at Iowa, with Fry having coached the Hawkeyes for 20 seasons, from 1979-98.

Ferentz also surpassed Fry to become Iowa's all-time winningest football coach last season, and he enters this season with 152 career wins, becoming only the fifth Big Ten head coach to win 150 games. He shows no signs of slowing down, nor has he offered any hints about retiring.

Iowa is coming off a four-year stretch in which it combined to win 37 games, including nine victories last season capped off by a 27–22 win over Mississippi State in the Outback Bowl.

OFFENSE Senior quarterback Nate Stanley has thrown a combined 52 touchdown passes over the past two years, more than any quarterback in program history in back-to-back seasons. So that's the good news.

The bad news is that tight ends Noah Fant and T.J. Hockenson combined to catch 27 of Stanley's 52 scoring strikes, but they are no longer on the team after both declared for the 2019 NFL Draft. Senior Nate Wieting is the only tight end on the current roster who has caught a pass in college, and he has only three career receptions.

Stanley is on course to rank as one of the most prolific passers in program history with over 5,000 passing yards already. But Iowa is also just 9–9 in conference games with him as the starter. The next hurdle for the 6'4", 243-pound senior is to achieve team success, because that goes a long way in measuring a quarterback's legacy.

Stanley will have two experienced receivers to throw to in juniors Ihmir Smith-Marsette and Brandon Smith. Smith-Marsette averaged a healthy 15.7 yards on his 23 receptions. Smith caught 28 passes for 361 yards. Redshirt freshman Tyrone Tracy Jr. played well in the spring and should contribute.

The top three running backs from last season also return — although none averaged more than 5.0 yards per carry — as do starting tackles Alaric Jackson and Tristan Wirfs on what should be another stout Hawkeye offensive line.

DEFENSE Iowa's strength on defense starts in the trenches, where junior A.J. Epenesa is arguably the Big Ten's top pass rusher. He and junior Chauncey Golston should form a dynamic duo at defensive end. The 6'5", 265-pound Golston was one of the most improved players on the team last season. He isn't at the same level as Epenesa, but few are in the collegiate ranks.

There is plenty of experience returning at linebacker, but no proven stars. Senior Kristian Welch, junior Nick Niemann and sophomore Djimon Colbert were listed as the starters throughout spring practice, and all three played significant roles last season. Welch is considered the front-runner to replace the departed Jack Hockaday at middle linebacker.

Three of the four listed starters in the secondary —

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	Miami (Ohio)
Sept.	7	Rutgers
Sept.	14	at Iowa State
Sept.	28	Middle Tennessee
Oct.	5	at Michigan
Oct.	12	Penn State
Oct.	19	Purdue
Oct.	26	at Northwestern
Nov.	9	at Wisconsin
Nov.	16	Minnesota
Nov.	23	Illinois
Nov.	29	at Nebraska

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 9-4, 5-4 BIG TEN

Sept.	1	Northern Illinois	W	33-7
Sept.	8	Iowa State	W	13-3
Sept.	15	Northern Iowa	W	38-14
Sept.	22	Wisconsin	L	17-28
Oct.	6	at Minnesota	W	48-31
Oct.	13	at Indiana	W	42-16
Oct.	20	Maryland	W	23-0
Oct.	27	at Penn State	L	24-30
Nov.	3	at Purdue	L	36-38
Nov.	10	Northwestern	L	10-14
Nov.	17	at Illinois	W	63-0
Nov.	23	Nebraska	W	31-28
Jan.	1	vs. Mississippi State #	W	27-22

#Outback Bowl

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	B1G	NATIONAL
Scoring	31.2 ppg	4	44
Rushing	148.4 ypg	10	95
Passing	226.6 ypg	6	72
Total	375.0 ypg	10	92
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**B1G**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	17.8 ppg	2	11
Rushing	109.5 ypg	2	12
Passing	184.1 ypg	3	17
Total	293.6 ypg	2	7
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**B1G**	**NATIONAL**
+9	+0.69	2	16

2019 RECRUITS

1. Jestin Jacobs, LB, Clayton, OH
2. Ezra Miller, OT, Holstein, IA
3. Tyler Endres, OT, Norwalk, IA
4. Logan Lee, TE, Orion, IL
5. Justin Britt, OG, Indianapolis, IN
6. Jack Campbell, LB, Cedar Falls, IA
7. Tyler Goodson, RB, Suwanee, GA
8. Jalen Hunt, DE, Belleville, MI
9. Dane Belton, S, Tampa, FL
10. Sebastian Castro, S, Oak Lawn, IL
11. Josiah Miamen, TE, Dunlap, IL
12. Chris Reames, DE, Van Meter, IA
13. Daraun McKinney, DB, River Rouge, MI
14. Jake Karchinski, DE, De Pere, WI
15. Alex Padilla, QB, Englewood, CO
16. Sam LaPorta, TE, Highland, IL
17. Desmond Hutson, WR, Kansas City, MO
18. Noah Fenske, OG, New Hampton, IA
19. Shadrick Byrd, RB, Alabaster, AL
20. Jermari Harris, CB, Chicago, IL
21. Yahweh Jeudy, LB, Fort Lauderdale, FL
22. Taajhir McCall, DL, Pensacola, FL

Recruits ranked according to the 247SportsComposite

Tom Lynn

ADVANCED STATS

5 Factors: College Football's Most Important Stats

Field Position[1]		Rank
Offense	33.6	8
Defense	29.1	61
Margin	**+4.5**	**17**

Efficiency[2]		Rank
Offense	40.9%	84
Defense	39.9%	49
Margin	**+1.0%**	**67**

Explosiveness[3]		Rank
Offense	5.4	91
Defense	4.6	7
Margin	**+0.8**	**24**

Finishing Drives[4]		Rank
Offense	4.8	35
Defense	4.3	46
Margin	**+0.5**	**32**

Adjusted TO Margin[5]		Rank
Projected	-0.2	73
Actual	16	2
Margin	**+16.2**	**1**

KEY: **1**-Average starting field position by yard line; **2**-Rate of successful plays (gaining 50% of necessary yards on 1st down, 70% on 2nd down, 100% on 3rd down); **3**-Explosiveness=yards per play; **4**-Points per trip inside 40-yard line; **5**-TO margin accounting for "luck" • Advanced stats provided by Bill Connelly of SB Nation

NUMBERS TO KNOW

34

Iowa quarterbacks targeted tight ends with 34 percent of their passes in 2018, the most in FBS. Only three other schools were over even 30%. We'll see how much that rate goes down now that the best TE corps in the country is rebuilding.

+4.5

Field position was Iowa's friend. The Hawkeyes' average starting field position was 33.6 on offense (eighth in FBS) and 29.1 on defense (61st). The resulting margin of plus-4.5 yards per drive was 17th in FBS and third in the Big Ten.

1.6

You weren't getting a lot of big plays in Iowa games. The Hawkeyes averaged just 1.6 gains per game of 30-plus yards (113th in FBS), but opponents averaged only 1.5 (17th).

cornerbacks Matt Hankins and Michael Ojemudia and safety Geno Stone — all played key roles last season. The biggest concern is finding a replacement for Amani Hooker, who declared for the 2019 NFL Draft after having been named the Defensive Back of the Year in the Big Ten last season. Iowa took advantage of Hooker's versatility by using him as both a safety and linebacker. There were several players competing for that dual role in spring practice, including Ojemudia and redshirt freshman D.J. Johnson.

SPECIALISTS There are more questions than answers here, with hardly any experience at placekicker and with a punter who has struggled over the past two seasons. Juniors Caleb Shudak and Keith Duncan are competing to replace Miguel Recinos as the starting kicker, and the battle was too close to call in spring practice. Duncan's name might sound familiar because he made a field goal as time expired to beat Michigan in 2016. But then he lost the starting position to Recinos and didn't attempt any kicks over the past two seasons.

Senior Colten Rastetter has started at punter for the past two seasons, but his performance has left much to be desired, as he averaged under 40 yards per attempt in both seasons. Rastetter was listed ahead of sophomore Ryan Gersonde throughout spring practice, but the punter to watch out for is Michael Sleep-Dalton, a graduate transfer from Arizona State who was scheduled to enroll at Iowa in the summer.

Smith-Marsette gives Iowa one of the top kick returners in the Big Ten, and he was also competing in the spring to replace the departed Kyle Groeneweg as the punt returner.

FINAL ANALYSIS Iowa lost plenty of star power from last season, including two of the top tight ends in the country. But with a proven quarterback, three experienced running backs, two emerging stars at offensive tackle and maybe the top pass rusher in college football, the cupboard hardly is bare. And that's good, because the schedule is brutal, with road games at Iowa State, Michigan, Northwestern, Wisconsin, and Nebraska.

A 16th winning season under Ferentz seems well within reach, but the schedule might keep Iowa from winning the Big Ten West Division.

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (5)

WR	**12**	**Brandon Smith (Jr.)**	3	Tyrone Tracy Jr. (Fr.)
WR	6	Ihmir Smith-Marsette (Jr.)	89	Nico Ragaini (Fr.)
LT	**77**	**Alaric Jackson (Jr.)**	71	Mark Kallenberger (So.)
LG	68	Landan Paulsen (Sr.)	73	Cody Ince (Fr.)
C	**61**	**Cole Banwart (Jr.)**	65	Tyler Linderbaum (Fr.)
RG	66	Levi Paulsen (Sr.)	64	Kyler Schott (So.)
RT	**74**	**Tristan Wirfs (Jr.)**	79	Jack Plumb (Fr.)
TE	39	Nate Wieting (Sr.)	46	Tommy Kujawa (So.)
TE	42	Shaun Beyer (Jr.)	18	Drew Cook (Sr.)
QB	**4**	**Nate Stanley (Sr.)**	2	Peyton Mansell (So.)
RB	10	Mekhi Sargent (Jr.)	28	Toren Young (Jr.)

DEFENSE (4)

Returning Starters in Bold

DE	57	Chauncey Golston (Jr.)	92	John Waggoner (Fr.)
DT	95	Cedrick Lattimore (Sr.)	74	Austin Schulte (Jr.)
DT	91	Brady Reiff (Sr.)	99	Noah Shannon (Fr.)
DE	94	A.J. Epenesa (Jr.)	59	Nathan Nelson (Fr.)
OLB	49	Nick Niemann (Jr.)	35	Barrington Wade (Jr.)
MLB	34	Kristian Welch (Sr.)	43	Dillon Doyle (Fr.)
WLB	**32**	**Djimon Colbert (So.)**	52	Amani Jones (Sr.)
CB	**8**	**Matt Hankins (Jr.)**	20	Julius Brents (So.)
CB	**11**	**Michael Ojemudia (Sr.)**	33	Riley Moss (So.)
SS	26	Kaevon Merriweather (So.)	18	John Milani (Sr.)
FS	**9**	**Geno Stone (Jr.)**	28	Jack Koerner (So.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	10	Caleb Shudak (Jr.)	**KR**	6	Ihmir Smith-Marsette (Jr.)
P	7	Colten Rastetter (Sr.)	**PR**	6	Ihmir Smith-Marsette (Jr.)

2018 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Nate Stanley	**396**	**235**	**2,852**	**26**	**10**
Peyton Mansell	**8**	**5**	**83**	**0**	**1**

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD
Mekhi Sargent	**159**	**745**	**4.7**	**9**
Toren Young	**136**	**637**	**4.7**	**5**
Ivory Kelly-Martin	**97**	**341**	**3.5**	**2**

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Nick Easley	52	494	9.5	5
T.J. Hockenson	49	760	15.5	6
Noah Fant	39	519	13.3	7
Brandon Smith	**28**	**361**	**12.9**	**2**
Ihmir Smith-Marsette	**23**	**361**	**15.7**	**3**

KICKING: Miguel Recinos, 17-22 FGs, 98 pts.

TACKLES: Jake Gervase, 89; Amani Hooker, 65

SACKS: **A.J. Epenesa, 10.5**

INTERCEPTIONS: 3 players tied with 4

Returning Players in **Bold**

SCOUTING THE HAWKEYES

OPPOSING COACHES SIZE UP IOWA

"One of the most consistent identities in college football under Kirk Ferentz. You know what you're getting. They've really got a great O-line pedigree, second only to Wisconsin, that doesn't get as much attention as some other schools. They're old, old school on offense. They make the old NFL offense work because it's not something you see a lot — two backs, two tight ends. … They're smart in that they're aware of what they can do best with the personnel. They'll run, run, run and then dump play actions to a tight end and kill you. The last few years, we've seen them run their offense through their tight ends. … They're a slow pace team and want to wear you out. But if you get a lead on them, you can cut off a lot of their attack. They're not built to come back on you. Some of that is they've struggled to run as effectively as they used to against top-level teams. They've declined in that area recently. … You can find mismatches against them defensively because of the talent. They're big up front; they had three guys over 6'5" on their line last year. They can get their hands up and block passing lanes. They're not overly athletic at linebacker or in the secondary. You can find mismatches there and hurt them. … When they get you at their place and you turn the ball over a little bit, they'll eat you alive."

Minnesota **Golden Gophers**

National Forecast: **40** • Big Ten West Prediction: **5** • Projected Record: **7-5, 4-5 Big Ten**

Tyler Johnson

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: P.J. Fleck
Record at School: 12-13 (2 years)
Career Record: 42-35 (6 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Kirk Ciarrocca
Defensive Coordinator: Joe Rossi
Location: Minneapolis, MN
Stadium: TCF Bank Stadium (50,805)

KEY GOLDEN GOPHERS

TYLER JOHNSON, WR The precise route runner returns for his senior year and could challenge Eric Decker and Ron Johnson as the program's best ever.

CARTER COUGHLIN, DE While undersized at 6'4", 245 pounds, he makes up for it with speed and pass-rush moves.

ANTOINE WINFIELD JR., S When the Gophers lost him due to injury for the bulk of the Big Ten schedule, his absence was glaring.

KEY LOSSES

BLAKE CASHMAN, LB His speed and versatility disrupted a lot of opposing offenses.

DONNELL GREENE, OT Started 29 games during his tenure as a reliable anchor at the left tackle spot.

JACOB HUFF, S Savvy veteran presence for years in the secondary, with 93 total tackles, two interceptions, two forced fumbles and seven pass break-ups as a senior.

RISING STAR

Redshirt freshman tight end **BREVYN SPANN-FORD** has the size at 6'7" and 260 pounds to be a threat in the Gophers' passing game. The top in-state recruit in the 2018 class impressed on the scout team last fall and will be a big part of the offense in the fall.

After his Gophers won three of their final four games last year, coach P.J. Fleck welcomed heightened expectations entering his third season at Minnesota.

"People think we're going to be good; some people don't think we are going to be good," Fleck said during spring practice in March. "I'm going to err on everybody thinking we're going to be good, so we're going to train our players: Here's what's coming."

The Gophers welcome the pressure after going 7–6 in 2018 with one of the youngest teams in the nation. Minnesota returns the majority of its production from a year ago — 90 percent on offense and 66 on defense.

Together, these factors put the program on the upswing and could place the Gophers on the fringes of the national rankings. This meets Fleck's timeline. He often uses a home-building metaphor to describe his process: Year 1 was the excavation; Year 2 the pouring of the foundation; Year 3 the frame of the house.

OFFENSE The Gophers' nine returning offensive starters are the most in the Big Ten West, and it marks the first time Fleck will return experience at quarterback.

Sophomore QB Zack Annexstad won the job out of training camp in 2018 and started the first seven games before he was injured. Sophomore Tanner Morgan took over the rest of the way. Annexstad was 3–4 as a starter, while Morgan was 4–2. Morgan had a 147.6 passer rating to Annexstad's 117.7. Annexstad seems to be the better pure passer, while the shorter Morgan tends to create more with his legs.

The Gophers will feature a stable of quality targets, including All-Big Ten senior Tyler Johnson, who set single-season program records of 1,169 yards and 12 touchdowns a year ago. Lauded freshman Rashod Bateman impressed with 704 yards and six TDs. Tight ends Brevyn Spann-Ford and Jake Paulson could provide another layer of receiving options for a Gophers offense that has lacked any threat from the position under Fleck.

Sophomore back Mohamed Ibrahim rushed for 5.7 yards per carry and nine scores, with a Quick Lane Bowl MVP to cap his surprising year. He took a leading role after Rodney Smith and Shannon Brooks went down with ACL injuries. Smith and Brooks will be back healthy in 2019, setting up a three-headed rushing attack. Together, Brooks and Smith have rushed for more than 4,000 yards and nearly 40 touchdowns.

The Gophers' two departures come on the offensive line, and filling the left tackle spot vacated by Donnell Greene was the biggest challenge in spring practice.

DEFENSE Fleck fired defensive coordinator Robb Smith after his unit allowed 646 yards in a 55–31 blowout loss to lowly Illinois last November. It was the last straw after three previous Big Ten opponents put up at least 42 points and 420 total yards in blowouts. Interim DC Joe Rossi earned the job on a permanent basis after the Gophers' historic win over Wisconsin for Paul Bunyan's Axe, their first win in Madison since 1994.

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	29	South Dakota State
Sept.	7	at Fresno State
Sept.	14	Georgia Southern
Sept.	28	at Purdue
Oct.	5	Illinois
Oct.	12	Nebraska
Oct.	19	at Rutgers
Oct.	26	Maryland
Nov.	9	Penn State
Nov.	16	at Iowa
Nov.	23	at Northwestern
Nov.	30	Wisconsin

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 7-6, 3-6 BIG TEN

Aug.	30	New Mexico State	W	48-10
Sept.	8	Fresno State	W	21-14
Sept.	15	Miami (Ohio)	W	26-3
Sept.	22	at Maryland	L	13-42
Oct.	6	Iowa	L	31-48
Oct.	13	at Ohio State	L	14-30
Oct.	20	at Nebraska	L	28-53
Oct.	26	Indiana	W	38-31
Nov.	3	at Illinois	L	31-55
Nov.	10	Purdue	W	41-10
Nov.	17	Northwestern	L	14-24
Nov.	24	at Wisconsin	W	37-15
Dec.	26	vs. Georgia Tech #	W	34-10

#Quick Lane Bowl

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	B1G	NATIONAL
Scoring	28.9 ppg	8	65
Rushing	170.8 ypg	8	64
Passing	208.8 ypg	10	90
Total	379.6 ypg	9	86
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**B1G**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	26.5 ppg	8	59
Rushing	173.4 ypg	9	78
Passing	212.4 ypg	7	51
Total	385.8 ypg	6	54
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**B1G**	**NATIONAL**
-4	-0.31	11	89

2019 RECRUITS

1. Tyler Nubin, CB, Saint Charles, IL
2. Jacob Clark, QB, Rockwall, TX
3. Rashad Cheney, DT, Atlanta, GA
4. Keonte Schad, DT, Madison, WI*
5. JJ Guedet, OT, Washington, IL
6. Nnamdi Adim-Madumere, WR, Fort Worth, TX
7. Jason Williamson, ATH, Owatonna, MN
8. James Gordon IV, OLB, Plant City, FL
9. Donald Willis, LB, Cleveland, OH
10. D'Vion Harris, DE, Saint Louis, MO
11. MJ Anderson, DE, Saint Louis, MO
12. Gervarrius Owens, S, Moore, OK*
13. DeAngelo Carter, DT, Leesburg, GA
14. Logan Richter, DL, Perham, MN
15. Treyson Potts, RB, Williamsport, PA
16. Cole Kramer, QB, Eden Prairie, MN
17. Cam Wiley, RB, Las Vegas, NV
18. Mike Brown-Stephens, WR, Springfield, OH
19. Kelvin Clemmons, CB, Tampa, FL*
20. Solomon Brown, CB, Largo, FL
21. Peter Udoibok, WR, St. Paul, MN
22. Tyler Cooper, OL, Saint Croix Falls, WI
23. Michael Lantz, K, Fayetteville, GA
24. Brady Weeks, LS, O'Fallon, MO

*junior college transfer

Recruits ranked according to the 247SportsComposite

AP

ADVANCED STATS

5 Factors: College Football's Most Important Stats

Field Position[1]		Rank
Offense	31.7	22
Defense	28.1	37
Margin	**+3.6**	**31**

Efficiency[2]		Rank
Offense	42.6%	63
Defense	41.3%	68
Margin	**+1.3%**	**66**

Explosiveness[3]		Rank
Offense	5.7	69
Defense	5.9	86
Margin	**-0.2**	**89**

Finishing Drives[4]		Rank
Offense	4.1	105
Defense	4.7	78
Margin	**-0.6**	**104**

Adjusted TO Margin[5]		Rank
Projected	-4.7	111
Actual	-4	89
Margin	**+0.7**	**53**

KEY: 1-Average starting field position by yard line; **2**-Rate of successful plays (gaining 50% of necessary yards on 1st down, 70% on 2nd down, 100% on 3rd down); **3**-Explosiveness=yards per play; **4**-Points per trip inside 40-yard line; **5**-TO margin accounting for "luck" • Advanced stats provided by Bill Connelly of SB Nation

NUMBERS TO KNOW

13

Minnesota lacked big plays on offense, but the Gophers didn't get pushed backwards much. UM rushers were stuffed at or behind the line on only 13 percent of non-sack carries, fifth in FBS.

24

You weren't going to have the same good fortune. Minnesota opponents were stuffed at or behind the line on 24 percent of non-sack runs (11th in FBS). Three different Gopher linebackers had at least 13 run stuffs each, and two return.

20.1

Minnesota might have been the most unpredictable team in football. Only two Gopher games finished within 10 points of the spread — they overachieved by double digits in six games and underachieved by double digits in five. Average difference overall: 20.1 points per game.

It will be interesting to see the stamp Rossi puts on the defense with a full year to prepare. The view in spring practice was a base 4-3 front, with many variations off of it.

Last year's top two tacklers — linebacker Blake Cashman and safety Jacob Huff — are gone, but dangerous end Carter Coughlin headlines the list of six returning starters. Coughlin's speed and pass-rush moves are tough to stop. He had a 9.5-sack season in 2018.

Minnesota natives Thomas Barber and Kamal Martin will stabilize a linebacker corps without Cashman.

The biggest boon is the return of safety Antoine Winfield Jr., who redshirted after a foot injury in the fourth game a year ago. The Freshman All-American in 2016 will be counted on to provide leadership in a secondary with a host of unproven players. Sophomore Terell Smith has the length, speed and early experience to now become a top cornerback.

Defensive tackle is the most uncertain position group, with Notre Dame graduate transfer Micah Dew-Treadway set to be counted on this season. A pair of 2019 recruits, Keonte Schad and Rashad Cheney, will need to quickly acclimate to the physical demands of the Big Ten.

SPECIALISTS Emmit Carpenter, the Gophers' most accurate placekicker ever, is gone, and a position battle will be waged between scholarship freshman Michael Lantz and UConn graduate transfer Michael Tarbutt. Senior punter Jacob Herbers punted only 51 times, the fewest in a Gophers season since 2005.

Winfield and Demetrius Douglas each had punt returns for touchdowns last season.

FINAL ANALYSIS The Gophers' light non-conference schedule and easier crossover games against the Big Ten East (Maryland, Penn State and Rutgers) put a nine-win season — including the bowl game — on the table for the first time since 2016. Given Minnesota's returning offensive production, a measure of improvement from Annexstad and/or Morgan could make this one of the top offenses in the Big Ten. If Rossi's defense builds on a strong finish to 2018 and replaces a few key tacklers, Minnesota might have balance on both sides of the ball.

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (9)

WR	6	**Tyler Johnson (Sr.)**	82	Demetrius Douglas (So.)
WR	13	**Rashod Bateman (So.)**	12	Erik Gibson (Fr.)
WR	7	**Chris Autman-Bell (So.)**	22	Mike Brown-Stephens (Fr.)
LT	79	Jason Dickson (Jr.)	**70**	**Sam Schlueter (Jr.)**
LG	**77**	**Blaise Andries (So.)**	63	Austin Beier (Fr.)
C	**64**	**Conner Olson (Jr.)**	60	John Michael Schmitz (So.)
RG	51	Curtis Dunlap Jr. (Fr.)	71	Ben Davis (Jr.)
RT	**78**	**Daniel Faalele (So.)**	74	Kyle Sassack (So.)
TE	88	Brevyn Spann-Ford (Fr.)	80	Jake Paulson (So.)
QB	5	Zack Annexstad (So.)	**2**	**Tanner Morgan (So.)**
RB	1	Rodney Smith (Sr.)	**24**	**Mohamed Ibrahim (So.)**

DEFENSE (7)

Returning Starters in Bold

DE	**45**	**Carter Coughlin (Sr.)**	9	Esezi Otomewo (So.)
DT	18	Micah Dew-Treadway (Sr.)	19	Keonte Schad (Jr.)
DT	52	Jamaal Teague (So.)	90	Sam Renner (Sr.)
DE	34	Boye Mafe (So.)	**46**	**Winston DeLattiboudere (Sr.)**
LB	**21**	**Kamal Martin (Sr.)**	8	Thomas Rush (So.)
LB	**41**	**Thomas Barber (Sr.)**	14	Braelen Oliver (Fr.)
CB	6	Chris Williamson (Sr.)	26	Justus Harris (Jr.)
CB	31	Kiondre Thomas (Jr.)	**16**	**Coney Durr (Jr.)**
CB	**4**	**Terell Smith (So.)**	2	Phillip Howard (Jr.)
S	**11**	**Antoine Winfield Jr. (So.)**		Gervarrius Owens (So.)
S	23	Jordan Howden (So.)	22	Benny Sapp III (So.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K		Michael Tarbutt (Sr.)	**KR** 82	Demetrius Douglas (So.)
P	47	Jacob Herbers (Sr.)	**PR** 11	Antoine Winfield Jr. (So.)

2018 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Tanner Morgan	152	89	1,401	9	6
Zack Annexstad	187	97	1,277	9	7

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD
Mohamed Ibrahim	202	1,160	5.7	9
Bryce Williams	117	502	4.3	4
Seth Green	76	282	3.7	8
Rodney Smith	25	154	6.2	0
Shannon Brooks	22	154	7.0	1

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Tyler Johnson	78	1,169	15.0	12
Rashod Bateman	51	704	13.8	6
Chris Autman-Bell	28	449	16.0	0

KICKING: Emmit Carpenter, 17-23 FGs, 94 pts.

TACKLES: Blake Cashman, 104; Jacob Huff, 93

SACKS: **Carter Coughlin, 9.5**

INTERCEPTIONS: **Coney Durr, 2;** Jacob Huff, 2

Returning Players in **Bold**

SCOUTING THE GOLDEN GOPHERS

OPPOSING COACHES SIZE UP MINNESOTA

"The culture looks like it's working. They were a very different team on the field from '17 to '18. In '17 you could see them, player by player, figuring out if they were all the way bought in on the systems and the attitudes. … You get the sense coaching against him that P.J. Fleck is more of the new CEO type of college head coach than a pure X's and O's, but if he's recruiting and motivating that talent there's a place for that. You saw that toward the end of last season — all of sudden those players saw success on the field and started really playing their ass off, playing above their ability. … They're fairly simple offensively. They're very big up front. They're a big zone team, they want to cover you up and let the backs find their creases. But that O-line makes holes. They're stout dudes. … I think defensively they're doing a good job, but they don't have the personnel. … They need to settle on a starting QB right away and get consistency there. Is it going to be Tanner Morgan? He was better than we expected down the stretch last year. … The change in defensive coordinators showed a lot. Once they switched, they played a lot harder, a lot more simple stuff after the change. … They're recruiting better than that program ever has. They need to find a way to put that on the field with their defense, especially with the cold-weather atmosphere."

Nebraska **Cornhuskers**

National Forecast: **17** • Big Ten West Prediction: **1** • Projected Record: **9-4, 6-3 Big Ten**

Adrian Martinez

Nebraska might've been the most respected 4–8 team in the country at the end of 2018, even though Scott Frost's first season as head coach produced the same record as Mike Riley's last. The Huskers lost their first six games but held together for a competitive finish that included a 36–31 loss at Ohio State and a 9–6 victory against Michigan State. Similarly surprising given the record, perhaps, is the inclusion of sophomore quarterback Adrian Martinez's name in discussion regarding the 2019 Heisman Trophy.

The optimism that followed the arrival of Frost and staff, following a 13–0 season and dramatic turnaround at UCF, remains despite last season's struggles.

OFFENSE Discussion of the offense has to begin with Martinez. As if expectations weren't already high, Frost said on the Husker radio network in the spring that by the time Martinez finishes: "I hope he's thought of as the greatest ever to play at Nebraska at that position." Defensive lineman Darrion Daniels, a grad transfer from Oklahoma State, was asked what other Big 12 quarterback he had faced was most like Martinez as a run-pass threat. "Patrick Mahomes," Daniels said.

Martinez averaged a school-record 295.1 yards of offense per game. How much he improves depends not only on a year's experience but also on those around him.

The status of running back Maurice Washington is uncertain because of off-field legal problems, creating opportunity for junior college transfer Dedrick Mills and true freshman Rahmir Johnson to help fill the void created by the loss of 1,000-yard rusher Devine Ozigbo.

The most significant loss on offense is wide receiver Stanley Morgan Jr., although JD Spielman might have reached 1,000 receiving yards as well if he hadn't missed the final two games because he was injured. Tight end Jack Stoll is a receiving threat, and walk-on wideout Kade Warner has gotten on the field because of his reliability. Otherwise, the receivers are unproven.

The offensive line is led by Brenden Jaimes, who has 21 consecutive starts. He went through a period of adjustment last season, moving from right to left tackle. The Huskers' line play mirrored his adjustment, improving as the season progressed and players became more comfortable in Frost's system. Right tackle Matt Farniok might be a better fit at guard, but that would leave a void at tackle. Cam Jurgens, recruited as a tight end, appears to have a bright future at center, where he emerged as the projected starter in the spring.

DEFENSE On defense, the primary concern off the field is outside linebackers (and special teams) coach Jovan Dewitt's battle with throat cancer. Despite having begun treatment, Dewitt was a regular at practice in the spring, an inspiration to coaches and players.

Statistically, there's plenty of room for improvement. The Huskers allowed, on average, the third-most yards (433.5 ypg) and points (31.3 ppg) since 1946, when official records were first kept.

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Scott Frost
Record at School: 4-8 (1 year)
Career Record: 23-15 (3 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Troy Walters
Defensive Coordinator: Erik Chinander
Location: Lincoln, NE
Stadium: Memorial Stadium (85,458)

KEY CORNHUSKERS

ADRIAN MARTINEZ, QB Only the third true freshman QB to start for Nebraska, Martinez earned Freshman All-America recognition after setting five school records.

JD SPIELMAN, WR Third-team All-Big Ten; 66 catches for 818 yards and eight touchdowns despite missing two games due to injury.

MOHAMED BARRY, LB Third-team All-Big Ten performer had a team-leading 112 tackles, most since Lavonte David (133) in 2011.

KEY LOSSES

STANLEY MORGAN JR., WR Nebraska's first 1,000-yard receiver in a season; set school career records for receptions (189) and receiving yards (2,747).

DEVINE OZIGBO, RB Huskers' first 1,000-yard rusher since Ameer Abdullah in 2014 was named third-team All-Big Ten.

LUKE GIFFORD, LB Led Nebraska in tackles for a loss (12.0), sacks (5.5) and quarterback hurries (seven).

RISING STAR

Kentucky's Mr. Football, **WAN'DALE ROBINSON** has the athletic versatility that makes him a good (and immediate) fit in Nebraska's offense. During his high school career, he averaged over 11 yards per carry as a running back and totaled 118 offensive touchdowns.

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	South Alabama
Sept.	7	at Colorado
Sept.	14	Northern Illinois
Sept.	21	at Illinois
Sept.	28	Ohio State
Oct.	5	Northwestern
Oct.	12	at Minnesota
Oct.	26	Indiana
Nov.	2	at Purdue
Nov.	16	Wisconsin
Nov.	23	at Maryland
Nov.	29	Iowa

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 4-8, 3-6 BIG TEN

Sept.	8	Colorado	L	28-33
Sept.	15	Troy	L	19-24
Sept.	22	at Michigan	L	10-56
Sept.	29	Purdue	L	28-42
Oct.	6	at Wisconsin	L	24-41
Oct.	13	at Northwestern (ot)	L	31-34
Oct.	20	Minnesota	W	53-28
Oct.	27	Bethune-Cookman	W	45-9
Nov.	3	at Ohio State	L	31-36
Nov.	10	Illinois	W	54-35
Nov.	17	Michigan State	W	9-6
Nov.	23	at Iowa	L	28-31

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	B1G	NATIONAL
Scoring	30.0 ppg	6	58
Rushing	209.0 ypg	4	28
Passing	247.2 ypg	4	52
Total	456.2 ypg	2	25
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**B1G**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	31.3 ppg	12	88
Rushing	195.8 ypg	12	96
Passing	237.8 ypg	9	78
Total	433.5 ypg	12	94
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**B1G**	**NATIONAL**
-2	-0.17	10	83

2019 RECRUITS

1. Wan'Dale Robinson, RB, Frankfort, KY
2. Nick Henrich, LB, Omaha, NE
3. Noa Pola-Gates, S, Gilbert, AZ
4. Bryce Benhart, OT, Lakeville, MN
5. Ty Robinson, DE, Gilbert, AZ
6. Luke McCaffrey, QB, Littleton, CO
7. Jahkeem Green, DT, Sumter, SC*
8. Darien Chase, WR, Camas, WA
9. Demariyon Houston, WR, Oklahoma City, OK
10. Jamie Nance, WR, Blanchard, OK
11. Rahmir Johnson, RB, Oradell, NJ
12. Chris Hickman, TE, Omaha, NE
13. Jackson Hannah, OLB, Nashville, TN
14. Ronald Thompkins, RB, Loganville, GA
15. Dedrick Mills, RB, Waycross, GA*
16. Myles Farmer, S, Atlanta, GA
17. Quinton Newsome, S, Suwanee, GA
18. Mosai Newsom, LB, Waverly, IA
19. Jamin Graham, LB, Attalla, AL
20. Garrett Nelson, DE, Scottsbluff, NE
21. Javin Wright, CB, Chandler, AZ
22. Garrett Snodgrass, LB, York, NE
23. Michael Lynn, OT, Englewood, CO
24. Brant Banks, DE, Houston, TX
25. Matthew Anderson, OT, Leesville, LA
26. Ethan Piper, DT, Norfolk, NE
27. Jimmy Fritzsche, OT, Greenville, SC

*junior college transfer

Recruits ranked according to the 247SportsComposite

Jay Biggerstaff

ADVANCED STATS

5 Factors: College Football's Most Important Stats

Field Position[1]		Rank
Offense	26.4	123
Defense	31.1	105
Margin	**-4.7**	**116**

Efficiency[2]		Rank
Offense	47.7%	16
Defense	43.5%	90
Margin	**+4.2%**	**41**

Explosiveness[3]		Rank
Offense	6.3	20
Defense	5.8	75
Margin	**+0.5**	**48**

Finishing Drives[4]		Rank
Offense	4.7	54
Defense	4.4	53
Margin	**+0.3**	**50**

Adjusted TO Margin[5]		Rank
Projected	3.7	42
Actual	-2	81
Margin	**-5.7**	**119**

KEY: 1-Average starting field position by yard line; **2**-Rate of successful plays (gaining 50% of necessary yards on 1st down, 70% on 2nd down, 100% on 3rd down); **3**-Explosiveness=yards per play; **4**-Points per trip inside 40-yard line; **5**-TO margin accounting for "luck" • Advanced stats provided by Bill Connelly of SB Nation

NUMBERS TO KNOW

-4.7

Nebraska was facing a tilted field for much of the year. The Huskers' average starting field position margin was minus-4.7 yards per drive (26.4 on offense, 31.1 on defense), 116th in FBS and 13th in the conference, ahead of only Rutgers.

-5.7

Based on national averages for fumble recovery rates and the ratio of interceptions to passes broken up, Nebraska's turnover margin should have been about plus-3.7. Instead, it was minus-2. That minus-5.7 turnover difference was the second-most unlucky in the Big Ten.

+12.5

Nebraska's win-loss turnaround in the second half of the season appeared to be statistically valid. The Huskers' average scoring margin during their 0–6 start was minus-15 points per game, but during their 4–2 finish, it was plus-12.5.

As with the offense, a season of comfort in Erik Chinander's defense has allowed for that improvement. The base is a 3-4 alignment, but opposing offenses can't lock in on that.

"Once you figure it out, you can just play faster," says Frost. "You can let everything go and just attack the ball."

The defensive line has experience and, after Mike Dawson left for the New York Giants, a third coach in as many years — Tony Tuioti, who came from California. The line also has Daniels, who left Oklahoma State to play with his brother Damion. He'll have an immediate impact at nose guard, joining twins Carlos and Khalil Davis and Ben Stille in an experienced front.

Inside linebacker Mohamed Barry, the leading tackler, has stepped into a leadership role along with Darrion Daniels, while JoJo Domann has added muscle and figures to provide much-needed pressure on the outside. Because of his versatility, Domann could line up at safety, the position at which he was recruited, depending on the scheme.

Lamar Jackson and Dicaprio Bootle are experienced corners, though Jackson was the only corner with an interception last season; he had two of Nebraska's 11. The rest of the secondary is mostly young and unproven. Deontai Williams is the lone exception, with one start. Even so, the defense is expected to make a big jump in Year 2 under Frost.

SPECIALISTS Walk-on Isaac Armstrong took over for Caleb Lightbourn, a scholarship player, as the punter, starting the final seven games and averaging 43.6 yards, second best in the Big Ten. Barret Pickering made 40-of-41 extra-point kicks and 14-of-18 field goals, including his last 10. The return game needs to improve.

FINAL ANALYSIS The Huskers have made dramatic strides on the field and off. They're much more comfortable in Frost's system. And they're much better prepared to compete in the Big Ten after a year under strength coach Zach Duval.

Nebraska failed to play in a bowl for the second season in a row. "I'm not used to having Christmas off," Frost says. "It was nice to be with family." However, he adds, "I don't want it to ever happen again."

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (6)

WR	**10**	**JD Spielman (Jr.)**	26	Miles Jones (Fr.)
WR	**81**	**Kade Warner (So.)**	19	Mike Williams (Sr.)
WR	88	Jaron Woodyard (Sr.)	1	Wan'Dale Robinson (Fr.)
LT	**76**	**Brenden Jaimes (Jr.)**	65	Christian Gaylord (Sr.)
LG	75	Trent Hixson (So.)	50	John Raridon (Jr.)
C	51	Cam Jurgens (Fr.)	66	Hunter Miller (So.)
RG	56	Boe Wilson (Jr.)	68	Will Farniok (Fr.)
RT	**71**	**Matt Farniok (Jr.)**		Bryce Benhart (Fr.)
TE	**86**	**Jack Stoll (Jr.)**	11	Austin Allen (So.)
QB	**2**	**Adrian Martinez (So.)**	16	Noah Vedral (So.)
RB	28	Maurice Washington (So.)		Dedrick Mills (Jr.)

DEFENSE (5)

Returning Starters in Bold

DE	**95**	**Ben Stille (Jr.)**	97	Deontre Thomas (So.)
DT	79	Darrion Daniels (Sr.)	93	Damion Daniels (So.)
DE	**96**	**Carlos Davis (Sr.)**	94	Khalil Davis (Sr.)
OLB	13	JoJo Domann (Jr.)	34	Breon Dixon (So.)
ILB	**7**	**Mohamed Barry (Sr.)**	3	Will Honas (Jr.)
ILB	31	Collin Miller (Jr.)	42	Nick Henrich (Fr.)
OLB	43	Tyrin Ferguson (Sr.)	22	Alex Davis (Sr.)
CB	**21**	**Lamar Jackson (Sr.)**	5	Cam Taylor (So.)
CB	**23**	**Dicaprio Bootle (Jr.)**	15	Braxton Clark (Fr.)
S	6	Eric Lee (Sr.)	19	Marquel Dismuke (Jr.)
S	41	Deontai Williams (Jr.)	26	CJ Smith (Fr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	32	Barret Pickering (So.)	**KR** 1	Wan'Dale Robinson (Fr.)
P	98	Isaac Armstrong (Sr.)	**PR** 5	Cam Taylor (So.)

2018 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Adrian Martinez	347	224	2,617	17	8
Andrew Bunch	47	31	320	2	2

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD
Devine Ozigbo	155	1,082	7.0	12
Adrian Martinez	140	629	4.5	8
Maurice Washington	77	455	5.9	3
Greg Bell	35	173	4.9	0
Wyatt Mazour	11	76	6.9	1

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Stanley Morgan Jr.	70	1,004	14.3	7
JD Spielman	66	818	12.4	8
Maurice Washington	24	221	9.2	1
Devine Ozigbo	23	203	8.8	0

KICKING: **Barret Pickering, 14-18 FGs, 82 pts.**

TACKLES: **Mohamed Barry, 112;** Dedrick Young, 83

SACKS: Luke Gifford, 5.5

INTERCEPTIONS: 3 players tied with 2

Returning Players in **Bold**

SCOUTING THE CORNHUSKERS

OPPOSING COACHES SIZE UP NEBRASKA

"Still an ongoing project, but they're the conference's most talked-about team in recruiting. Scott Frost is going to get it turned around. He's already set the tone, you can tell right away. That's a different team in terms of behavior and attitude on the sidelines. We noticed it immediately. … Offensively, they're going to have more consistent playmakers this year. They're going to have more speed than you would expect from Nebraska in recent years. The QB (Adrian Martinez) is a hell of a player. He's going to improve a lot over a true freshman year of being thrown into bad situations. As long as that kid's at Nebraska, they're going to be a problem in the West. They're real thin behind him — they're thin at most positions, which is why they're still a work in progress. … They love to use the spread run game as a base and get creative from there. … They struggled a lot on defense, and they're still building it back. They need an identity. That's what separates a talented roster or a high-scoring team from a Northwestern or Wisconsin. You need a defense that can make it ugly. … We see them out in recruiting showing in places they haven't in decades. That's the ability to score some points right away and promise immediate playing time in the Big Ten."

Northwestern **Wildcats**

National Forecast: **35** • Big Ten West Prediction: **4** • Projected Record: **7-5, 5-4 Big Ten**

Paddy Fisher

In 1995, Pat Fitzgerald and his teammates fast-tracked Northwestern from historic futility to the Big Ten championship and the Rose Bowl. Although Fitzgerald has yet to coach his alma mater to either destination, the program looks more secure than ever: 36 wins since 2015, three consecutive bowl victories, its first division title last season and a facility that is the envy of college football.

Northwestern's next step is clear — its first league championship since 2000 — but it doesn't intend to cut corners.

"Our plan works," Fitzgerald says. "What we do and how we do things works to get to a championship level. To become consistent at that level … is now the challenge."

OFFENSE Northwestern has defied analytics by winning a lot lately despite one of the feeblest offenses in the FBS. Since 2015, the Wildcats rank 123rd in average yards per play (4.95) and 121st in percentage of offensive plays of 10 yards or longer (17.2). It's simply not sustainable to expect more victories without more big plays.

Enter quarterback Hunter Johnson. A five-star recruit in the 2016 class, Johnson is eligible after transferring from Clemson and sitting out last season. He's by far the most decorated recruit in Fitzgerald's tenure and has the arm to boost a passing game that since 2015 has averaged just 6.24 yards per attempt, ranking 122nd nationally. Although four-year starter Clayton Thorson won games and set records, it's possible for Johnson to represent an upgrade, especially if he provides the running ability the offense lacked in 2018. Senior TJ Green pushed Johnson throughout spring practice and could be a factor here.

Coaches expect the receiving corps to be deeper and more explosive. Ben Skowronek, whose heroic TD catch at Iowa propelled Northwestern to a division title, leads the group after consecutive 45-catch seasons. Riley Lees should be a reliable option in the slot, but a key question is whether Kyric McGowan, JJ Jefferson, Ramaud Chiaokhiao-Bowman and perhaps incoming freshmen Genson Hooper-Price and Bryce Kirtz can stretch the field.

Isaiah Bowser averaged 108.0 yards rushing in the final eight games after becoming the Cats' primary back following the surprise medical retirement of Jeremy Larkin. Northwestern expects more depth alongside Bowser with John Moten IV, Jesse Brown and Drake Anderson, son of Northwestern's single-season rushing leader Damien Anderson. The offensive line will be a big story line as assistant coach Kurt Anderson takes over a group that has underachieved for parts of Northwestern's recent surge.

DEFENSE The competitive depth Fitzgerald craves on offense largely shows up on the defense. All-Big Ten end Joe Gaziano leads a line that should have no shortage of pass-rushing options (Earnest Brown IV, Samdup Miller, perhaps redshirt freshmen Eku Leota and Devin O'Rourke). The key will be finding a space-eating interior lineman to stop the run, just as Jordan Thompson did last year, and as Tyler Lancaster did the season before. Senior Alex Miller is the likeliest choice there.

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Pat Fitzgerald
Record at School: 96-70 (13 years)
Career Record: 96-70 (13 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Mick McCall
Defensive Coordinator: Mike Hankwitz
Location: Evanston, IL
Stadium: Ryan Field (47,130)

KEY WILDCATS

JOE GAZIANO, DE Two-time All-Big Ten selection ranks second in the league with 16.5 sacks during the past two seasons, to go along with seven forced fumbles.

PADDY FISHER, LB All-Big Ten honoree in his first two seasons already has recorded 229 career tackles, including 14 for a loss.

ISAIAH BOWSER, RB Surprise starter in 2018 had the third-highest rushing total (866) for a first-year player in team history.

KEY LOSSES

CLAYTON THORSON, QB Set a Big Ten QB record with 53 starts while setting team records for career passing yards (10,731), completions (991), attempts (1,696) and TDs (61).

NATE HALL, LB Started portions of four seasons and finished with 30.5 total tackles for a loss in the past two years.

MONTRE HARTAGE, CB Had 10 career interceptions and recorded at least 10 passes defensed in each of his final three seasons.

RISING STAR

After being thrown into action as a true freshman, **GREG NEWSOME II** is expected to occupy an enhanced role as possibly Northwestern's top cover corner. "He's fearless," head coach Pat Fitzgerald says. "He's just got an incredibly bright future."

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	at Stanford
Sept.	14	UNLV
Sept.	21	Michigan State
Sept.	28	at Wisconsin
Oct.	5	at Nebraska
Oct.	18	Ohio State
Oct.	26	Iowa
Nov.	2	at Indiana
Nov.	9	Purdue
Nov.	16	Massachusetts
Nov.	23	Minnesota
Nov.	30	at Illinois

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 9-5, 8-1 BIG TEN

Aug.	30	at Purdue	W	31-27
Sept.	8	Duke	L	7-21
Sept.	15	Akron	L	34-39
Sept.	29	Michigan	L	17-20
Oct.	6	at Michigan State	W	29-19
Oct.	13	Nebraska (ot)	W	34-31
Oct.	20	at Rutgers	W	18-15
Oct.	27	Wisconsin	W	31-17
Nov.	3	Notre Dame	L	21-31
Nov.	10	at Iowa	W	14-10
Nov.	17	at Minnesota	W	24-14
Nov.	24	Illinois	W	24-16
Dec.	1	vs. Ohio State #	L	24-45
Dec.	31	vs. Utah %	W	31-20

#Indianapolis %Holiday Bowl

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	B1G	NATIONAL
Scoring	24.2 ppg	12	100
Rushing	114.9 ypg	14	120
Passing	239.4 ypg	5	59
Total	354.4 ypg	12	108
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**B1G**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	23.2 ppg	6	41
Rushing	129.6 ypg	4	26
Passing	261.2 ypg	12	109
Total	390.9 ypg	8	64
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**B1G**	**NATIONAL**
+7	+0.50	3	27

2019 RECRUITS

1. Genson Hooper-Price, WR, Houston, TX
2. Bryce Kirtz, WR, Brownsburg, IN
3. Michael Jansey, LB, Batavia, IL
4. Thomas Gordon, TE, Houston, TX
5. Connor Foster, OT, Milford, OH
6. Duke Olges, DE, Winnetka, IL
7. Jason Gold, DE, League City, TX
8. Coco Azema, S, Cypress Creek, TX
9. Malik Washington, WR, Lawrenceville, GA
10. Rod Heard, CB, Farmington, MI
11. Zachary Franks, OT, Baltimore, MD
12. Brandon Joseph, S, College Station, TX
13. Bryce Gallagher, LB, Raynham, MA
14. Conrad Rowley, OG, Independence, MO
15. Cameron Mitchell, CB, Bolingbrook, IL
16. Adetomiwa Adebawore, DE, Kansas City, MO
17. Evan Hull, RB, Osseo, MN
18. Wayne Dennis, WR, Tampa, FL
19. Dom D'Antonio, OT, Woodstock, GA

Recruits ranked according to the 247SportsComposite

John Mersits/CSM via AP

ADVANCED STATS

5 Factors: College Football's Most Important Stats

Field Position[1]		Rank
Offense	30.9	42
Defense	29.2	64
Margin	+1.7	50
Efficiency[2]		**Rank**
Offense	38.7%	103
Defense	40.6%	60
Margin	-1.9%	88
Explosiveness[3]		**Rank**
Offense	4.7	124
Defense	5.6	57
Margin	-0.9	105
Finishing Drives[4]		**Rank**
Offense	4.1	109
Defense	4.1	30
Margin	+0.0	69
Adjusted TO Margin[5]		**Rank**
Projected	3.7	41
Actual	7	23
Margin	+3.3	33

KEY: **1**-Average starting field position by yard line; **2**-Rate of successful plays (gaining 50% of necessary yards on 1st down, 70% on 2nd down, 100% on 3rd down); **3**-Explosiveness=yards per play; **4**-Points per trip inside 40-yard line; **5**-TO margin accounting for "luck" • Advanced stats provided by Bill Connelly of SB Nation

NUMBERS TO KNOW

-0.9

Northwestern's offense averaged just 4.7 yards per play (124th in FBS); the defense allowed 5.6 (57th). That margin of minus-0.9 yards per play was 105th overall and third worst in the Big Ten.

-1.49

It was even worse on first downs. Northwestern averaged just 4.85 yards per play on first down and allowed 6.34, a minus-1.49 margin that was second worst in the Big Ten. Winning the Big Ten West despite this was miraculous.

0.762

Northwestern is 16–5 in one-possession finishes (a 0.762 win percentage) over the last four seasons and 45–26 under Pat Fitzgerald (0.634). The Wildcats are going to go about 5–3 in multi-possession games every year, but their seasons are defined by close games, and they've been awfully good of late.

Linebacker should be the strength of the unit with national awards candidate Paddy Fisher, who has eclipsed 110 tackles and has four forced fumbles and an interception in each of his first two seasons. Blake Gallagher joins Fisher after a breakout sophomore season, and Chris Bergin should fill the third starting spot.

The secondary should see the benefits of an injury-plagued 2018 season. Although top cover man Montre Hartage is a significant loss, Northwestern will go two-deep with experienced options at most spots. Safety looks especially promising with JR Pace (four interceptions in 2018) and Travis Whillock. Hopes are high for sophomore Greg Newsome II to fill Hartage's role.

SPECIALISTS Injuries made placekicking an adventure in 2018, and Northwestern needs Charlie Kuhbander or Drew Luckenbaugh to stay healthy and start extending their range — the Cats had only one made field goal longer than 37 yards last fall. Cody Gronewold should move into the top punter role vacated by Jake Collins. Northwestern's return game ranked in the middle of the Big Ten last fall and likely will remain there, as Lees and McGowan are expected to handle punts and kickoffs, respectively.

FINAL ANALYSIS To contend again in the improving Big Ten West, the Wildcats must supplement their signature defense with a more dynamic offense, likely built around the type of quarterback they rarely have at their disposal. It's hard to envision another division title without a big season from Johnson.

Other areas to watch include the offensive line under Anderson's direction, and defensive tackle, an underappreciated position during the recent run of success. Northwestern also must start stronger after opening the previous two seasons 1–3 and 2–3. The schedule is front-loaded with an opener at Stanford and matchups with Michigan State, Wisconsin, Nebraska, Ohio State and Iowa — all within the first seven games.

"We need to be more consistent," Fitzgerald says. "It starts with how we come out of camp health-wise, how we come out execution-wise. We've got a huge challenge out the gate, probably as hard of a challenge as anybody in the Big Ten, and we need to get ourselves prepared."

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (5)

WR	**88**	**Ben Skowronek (Sr.)**	12	JJ Jefferson (So.)
WR	**8**	**Kyric McGowan (Jr.)**	81	R.Chiaokhiao-Bowman (Jr.)
WR	19	Riley Lees (Jr.)	4	Berkeley Holman (So.)
LT	**70**	**Rashawn Slater (Jr.)**	74	Payne He'Bert (Fr.)
LG	66	Nik Urban (Jr.)	52	Sam Gerak (So.)
C	**65**	**Jared Thomas (Sr.)**	52	Sam Gerak (So.)
RG	56	Sam Stovall (Fr.)	69	Charlie Schmidt (Fr.)
RT	73	Gunnar Vogel (Jr.)	76	Ethan Wiederkehr (So.)
TE	80	Trey Pugh (Jr.)	89	Charlie Mangieri (So.)
QB	15	Hunter Johnson (So.)	10	TJ Green (Sr.)
RB	**25**	**Isaiah Bowser (So.)**	20	John Moten IV (Sr.)

DEFENSE (5)

Returning Starters in Bold

DE	**91**	**Samdup Miller (Jr.)**	98	Earnest Brown IV (Jr.)
DT	95	Alex Miller (Sr.)	90	Jake Saunders (Jr.)
DT	96	Trevor Kent (So.)	93	Joe Spivak (Jr.)
DE	**97**	**Joe Gaziano (Sr.)**	53	Eku Leota (Fr.)
SLB	28	Chris Bergin (Jr.)	31	Jaylen Rivers (Fr.)
MLB	**42**	**Paddy Fisher (Jr.)**	40	Peter McIntyre (So.)
WLB	**51**	**Blake Gallagher (Jr.)**	44	Khalid Jones (Fr.)
CB	3	Trae Williams (Sr.)	18	Cameron Ruiz (So.)
CB	2	Greg Newsome II (So.)	9	Roderick Campbell (Sr.)
S	**13**	**JR Pace (Jr.)**	22	Bryce Jackson (So.)
S	7	Travis Whillock (Jr.)	47	Joe Bergin (Sr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	14	Charlie Kuhbander (Jr.)	**KR**	8	Kyric McGowan (Jr.)
P	37	Cody Gronewold (So.)	**PR**	19	Riley Lees (Jr.)

2018 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Clayton Thorson	489	299	3,183	17	15
TJ Green	**36**	**20**	**169**	**0**	**1**

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD
Isaiah Bowser	**197**	**866**	**4.4**	**6**
Jeremy Larkin	72	346	4.8	5
John Moten IV	**46**	**204**	**4.4**	**3**
Chad Hanaoka	22	121	5.5	0

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Flynn Nagel	68	780	11.5	2
Cameron Green	57	483	8.5	4
Ben Skowronek	**45**	**562**	**12.5**	**3**
Riley Lees	**22**	**214**	**9.7**	**3**

KICKING: **Charlie Kuhbander, 5-9 FGs, 43 pts.; Drew Luckenbaugh, 3-4 FGs, 15 pts.**

TACKLES: **Blake Gallagher, 127; Paddy Fisher, 117**

SACKS: **Joe Gaziano, 7.5**

INTERCEPTIONS: **JR Pace, 4**

Returning Players in **Bold**

SCOUTING THE WILDCATS

OPPOSING COACHES SIZE UP NORTHWESTERN

"They're not the smart school football team, they're the physical one. They play you harder than any team in this conference. They're smart as hell and disciplined, but they're successful because they genuinely like to play physical football. Turn the film on every single year that (Pat) Fitzgerald has been there. They play their butts off. That's their secret. … They don't have elite speed at receiver, so they do a great job with mesh routes and short-yardage stuff. (Clayton) Thorson was such a good rhythm guy that they could dink and dunk you all the way down the field. Not a dangerous team passing the ball, though. … They're great at inside zone when they run, and the backs have always been solid. Not guys who blow you away, but they work in their system. … On defense, they're always going to be basic in scheme, but they're so assignment sound. They've done a good job of building their guys up to have size up front. (Paddy) Fisher is one of the better linebackers in the Big Ten. They're gonna be physical in the secondary and play a lot of press. … They've come a long way from where Northwestern used to be. They're going to stay at the top of a division that's getting better top to bottom. This is a program everyone expects to fall back except other coaching staffs. They've got a great facility now they can recruit to."

Purdue **Boilermakers**

National Forecast: **41** • Big Ten West Prediction: **6** • Projected Record: **6-6, 4-5 Big Ten**

Rondale Moore

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Jeff Brohm
Record at School: 13-13 (2 years)
Career Record: 43-23 (5 years)
Offensive Coordinators: Brian Brohm, JaMarcus Shephard
Defensive Coordinators: Nick Holt, Anthony Poindexter
Location: West Lafayette, IN
Stadium: Ross-Ade Stadium (57,282)

KEY BOILERMAKERS

RONDALE MOORE, WR After an All-America freshman season, Moore has established himself as one of the best receivers in the country.

MARKUS BAILEY, LB Has been Purdue's best defensive player the last three years and should continue to be during his senior season.

ELIJAH SINDELAR, QB With his 6'4" frame, strong arm and Jeff Brohm calling the plays, he'll put up some big numbers as long as his decision-making is what it was in 2017.

KEY LOSSES

DAVID BLOUGH, QB The Boilers lose nearly 1,500 career pass attempts and an inspiring voice and high-character individual.

JACOB THIENEMAN, S The former walk-on turned into a team captain and one of the most trusted pieces in Purdue's secondary.

KIRK BARRON, C The anchor of the Boilers' offensive line for three seasons.

RISING STAR

Freshman **GEORGE KARLAFTIS** could have gone virtually wherever he wanted. Alabama. Ohio State. Clemson. Instead, the five-star defensive end from West Lafayette chose to stay at home at Purdue. He'll step right into a starting role.

Purdue made a major statement on a national stage last year with a stunning 49–20 upset over No. 2 Ohio State. It was one of three wins over ranked opponents.

But perhaps the biggest statement came in the offseason. When Louisville tried to poach Purdue coach Jeff Brohm and halt the positive momentum the Boilers had created over the coach's first two seasons, the school opened its wallet, inking Brohm to a new seven-year deal worth $36.8 million.

"At this point in time, we are so convinced that we have the right head coach and he has assembled the right people around him, we felt it was important, to the best of our ability, to maintain that continuity [of] leadership in our program," athletic director Mike Bobinski says.

The deal makes Brohm the third-highest-paid coach in the Big Ten, which might sound like a lot for a coach who went 13–13 in his first two seasons. But consider that Brohm took a program that had won just nine games over the previous four seasons and led it to back-to-back bowl games, relying mostly on players who ranked at the bottom of the Big Ten recruiting rankings.

With Purdue's first top-25 recruiting class since 2004 and the salary bump, the pressure is on Brohm to not only build upon the positive momentum he created but also become a serious contender.

OFFENSE Even though Purdue lost quarterback David Blough, three starting linemen, a pair of starting receivers and its leading rusher, there are plenty of reasons to believe that the Boilermakers' offense will be even better than last year, when the unit became one of the nation's best big-play offenses with 25 plays of 40 yards or more (fifth best).

One reason is quarterback Elijah Sindelar. He's a prototypical pocket passer with a 6'4" frame and the strong arm of a former pitcher who hit the mid-90s. Senior tight end Brycen Hopkins brings pedigree as the son of former NFL offensive lineman Brad Hopkins.

But the main reason for optimism? Rondale Moore.

The electric wide receiver came to Purdue with 4.3 40-yard dash speed and the strength to squat 600 pounds. He burst onto the scene as a true freshman, producing a new Purdue record with 2,215 all-purpose yards, to earn consensus All-America honors. Around Moore, the Boilermakers stocked the receiver room with four new freshmen, including a pair of four-star recruits in David Bell and Milton Wright. Converted quarterback Jared Sparks continues to look more comfortable at his new position.

Meanwhile, running backs Tario Fuller and Zander Horvath will compete for carries.

The biggest question marks are on the offensive line, where tackles Grant Hermanns and Matt McCann are the only linemen with any experience to speak of. While the line will have a fresh feel, that's not necessarily a bad thing for Brohm, who has been forced to lean on patchwork units that were never overpowering in his first two seasons.

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	30	at Nevada
Sept.	7	Vanderbilt
Sept.	14	TCU
Sept.	28	Minnesota
Oct.	5	at Penn State
Oct.	12	Maryland
Oct.	19	at Iowa
Oct.	26	Illinois
Nov.	2	Nebraska
Nov.	9	at Northwestern
Nov.	23	at Wisconsin
Nov.	30	Indiana

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 6-7, 5-4 BIG TEN

Aug.	30	Northwestern	L	27-31
Sept.	8	Eastern Michigan	L	19-20
Sept.	15	Missouri	L	37-40
Sept.	22	Boston College	W	30-13
Sept.	29	at Nebraska	W	42-28
Oct.	13	at Illinois	W	46-7
Oct.	20	Ohio State	W	49-20
Oct.	27	at Michigan State	L	13-23
Nov.	3	Iowa	W	38-36
Nov.	10	at Minnesota	L	10-41
Nov.	17	Wisconsin (ot)	L	44-47
Nov.	24	at Indiana	W	28-21
Dec.	28	vs. Auburn #	L	14-63

#Music City Bowl

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	B1G	NATIONAL
Scoring	30.5 ppg	5	52
Rushing	136.4 ypg	11	105
Passing	307.5 ypg	2	11
Total	443.9 ypg	3	29
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**B1G**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	30.0 ppg	11	82
Rushing	167.9 ypg	7	71
Passing	284.7 ypg	14	128
Total	452.6 ypg	13	113
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**B1G**	**NATIONAL**
-5	-0.38	13	101

2019 RECRUITS

1. George Karlaftis, DE, West Lafayette, IN
2. David Bell, WR, Indianapolis, IN
3. Milton Wright, WR, Louisville, KY
4. Marvin Grant, S, Detroit, MI
5. Steven Faucheux, DT, West Chester, OH
6. Mershawn Rice, ATH, Reynoldsburg, OH
7. Kyle Bilodeau, TE, Woodberry Forest, VA
8. King Doerue, RB, Amarillo, TX
9. TJ Sheffield, WR, Thompson's Station, TN
10. Dontay Hunter II, DE, Westerville, OH
11. Khali Saunders, LB, Elmhurst, IL
12. Jalen Graham, ATH, Detroit, MI
13. Paul Piferi, QB, Villa Park, CA
14. Kyle Jornigan, OG, Youngstown, OH
15. Garrett Miller, TE, Round Rock, TX
16. Jacob Wahlberg, LB, Muskegon, MI
17. Cameron Allen, CB, Bluefield, VA
18. Nyles Beverly, CB, Macedonia, OH
19. Sulaiman Kpaka, DE, Grand Prairie, TX
20. Da'Joun Hewitt, RB, Nashville, TN
21. Cam Craig, OT, Dublin, OH
22. Dave Monnot III, OT, Joliet, IL
23. Spencer Holstege, OT, Grand Rapids, MI
24. Crishawn Long, LB, Cleveland, OH
25. Brooks Cormier, P, Tuscaloosa, AL

Recruits ranked according to the 247SportsComposite

Donald Page

ADVANCED STATS

5 Factors: College Football's Most Important Stats

Field Position[1]		Rank
Offense	29.4	80
Defense	29.0	57
Margin	+0.4	64

Efficiency[2]		Rank
Offense	43.6%	46
Defense	44.8%	101
Margin	-1.2%	83

Explosiveness[3]		Rank
Offense	6.3	19
Defense	6.0	95
Margin	+0.3	60

Finishing Drives[4]		Rank
Offense	4.9	31
Defense	4.7	84
Margin	+0.2	59

Adjusted TO Margin[5]		Rank
Projected	-4.4	109
Actual	-5	100
Margin	-0.6	71

KEY: **1**-Average starting field position by yard line; **2**-Rate of successful plays (gaining 50% of necessary yards on 1st down, 70% on 2nd down, 100% on 3rd down); **3**-Explosiveness=yards per play; **4**-Points per trip inside 40-yard line; **5**-TO margin accounting for "luck" • Advanced stats provided by Bill Connelly of SB Nation

NUMBERS TO KNOW

+1.6

The Boilermakers were excellent on first downs. They averaged 7.5 yards per first-down play on offense (seventh in FBS) and allowed 5.9 on defense (68th). That plus-1.6 margin ranked 13th overall and second in the Big Ten.

12.1

Purdue's defense lacked playmakers. The Boilermakers produced a havoc rate (total tackles for loss, passes defensed and forced fumbles divided by total plays) of just 12.1 percent, 122nd in FBS.

66

David Blough set a high bar from a consistency standpoint. He completed 66 percent of his passes in 2017-18. Elijah Sindelar has had his moments under Brohm, but he's completed only 57 percent of his passes, and with a higher interception rate (2.7 percent vs. Blough's 2.3).

DEFENSE Purdue's defense lost seven starters from 2017 to '18 — and it showed. This year, though, Purdue returns virtually everyone.

Linebacker Markus Bailey answered Purdue's biggest offseason question when he chose to return for his senior season. He racked up 115 tackles last year and should be in line for another big season. The Boilermakers bolstered the linebacker group further by adding Western Kentucky grad transfer Ben Holt, who is defensive coordinator Nick Holt's son. He'll compete for a starting job with junior Cornel Jones and sophomore Jaylan Alexander.

Up front, an area that was a weakness last year could turn into a strength. The Boilers added a dynamic piece to their line when defensive end George Karlaftis, a top-75 national recruit, chose to stay at home. Purdue also moved linebacker Derrick Barnes to the Leo position, a hybrid linebacker/end where he'll have more chances to rush the passer. Once nose tackle Lorenzo Neal returns from his ACL injury, the unit will be much more complete than last year.

In the secondary, senior safety Navon Mosley has started since his freshman season. The Boilers have prioritized length and athleticism with several interesting prospects, including redshirt freshman Cory Trice and true freshmen Jalen Graham and Marvin Grant.

Holt has proved what he can do with a veteran defense. In 2017, the Boilermakers ranked in the top 25 nationally in scoring defense. As the Boilermakers restock their defense after the 2017 mass exodus, they should continue to make strides back toward this standard.

SPECIALISTS After redshirting last year, placekicker J.D. Dellinger returns to the starting role. Purdue is likely to feature a new punter in freshman Brooks Cormier. Moore gives Purdue a spark in the return game.

FINAL ANALYSIS Brohm exceeded virtually every expectation by taking the Boilermakers to back-to-back bowl games in his first two seasons.

There is no doubt that the program is on an upward trajectory, but don't necessarily expect a huge jump in Year 3. Purdue might not be ready to contend in the Big Ten West in 2019, but there is no doubt that this program is headed in that direction.

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (4)

WR	4	**Rondale Moore (So.)**	33	Jackson Anthrop (Jr.)
WR		David Bell (Fr.)		Milton Wright (Fr.)
WR	12	**Jared Sparks (Jr.)**	10	Amad Anderson Jr. (Fr.)
LT	78	**Grant Hermanns (Jr.)**	74	Eric Miller (Fr.)
LG	58	Jimmy McKenna (Fr.)	70	Will Bramel (Fr.)
C	56	Viktor Beach (So.)	72	Sam Garvin (Fr.)
RG	76	Mark Stickford (So.)	66	Alex Criddle (Sr.)
RT	79	**Matt McCann (Sr.)**	76	Mark Stickford (So.)
TE	89	Brycen Hopkins (Sr.)	81	Darius Pittman (Jr.)
QB	2	Elijah Sindelar (Sr.)	13	Jack Plummer (Fr.)
RB	25	Tario Fuller (Sr.)	40	Zander Horvath (So.)

DEFENSE (9)

Returning Starters in Bold

DE	5	George Karlaftis (Fr.)	95	Jack Cravaack (Fr.)
NT	9	**Lorenzo Neal (Sr.)**	47	Jeff Marks (So.)
DT	44	**Anthony Watts (Jr.)**	92	**Giovanni Reviere (So.)**
LEO	55	**Derrick Barnes (Jr.)**	98	**Kai Higgins (Sr.)**
MLB	46	**Cornel Jones (Jr.)**	35	Ja'Qurius Smith (Fr.)
WLB		Ben Holt (Sr.)	36	Jaylan Alexander (So.)
SLB	21	**Markus Bailey (Sr.)**		Khali Saunders (Fr.)
CB	2	**Kenneth Major (So.)**	28	Jacob Abrams (So.)
CB	29	Simeon Smiley (Jr.)	1	Dedrick Mackey (So.)
S	27	**Navon Mosley (Sr.)**	6	Jalen Graham (Fr.)
S	23	Cory Trice (Fr.)	38	Brennan Thieneman (Jr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	85	J.D. Dellinger (Jr.)	KR	4	Rondale Moore (So.)
P		Brooks Cormier (Fr.)	PR	4	Rondale Moore (So.)

2018 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
David Blough	462	305	3,705	25	10
Elijah Sindelar	**44**	**26**	**283**	**2**	**3**

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD
D.J. Knox	157	883	5.6	8
Markell Jones	108	537	5.0	5
Rondale Moore	**21**	**213**	**10.1**	**2**
David Blough	75	52	0.7	3

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Rondale Moore	**114**	**1,258**	**11.0**	**12**
Isaac Zico	46	743	16.2	6
Brycen Hopkins	**34**	**583**	**17.1**	**2**
Jared Sparks	**28**	**274**	**9.8**	**0**

KICKING: Spencer Evans, 18-23 FGs, 96 pts.

TACKLES: **Markus Bailey, 115; Navon Mosley, 93**

SACKS: **Markus Bailey, 5.5**

INTERCEPTIONS: **Kenneth Major, 3**

Returning Players in **Bold**

SCOUTING THE BOILERMAKERS

OPPOSING COACHES SIZE UP PURDUE

"With the culture they've created and the excitement of last season, they're changing that brand. Rondale Moore came in as a true freshman and ended up an All-American. He's that special. Offensively with (Jeff) Brohm they're always going to be really multiple. They do a great job doing a lot of different things on offense. They want to get the ball out all different kinds of ways. There's a lot of NFL looks and formations they want to give you. They show a lot of pro stuff; from the outside, it's a high-volume playbook, and they still haven't really recruited to fit everything Brohm wants to do. … Defensively, they want to do the same thing, a lot of changes, trying to confuse you. They disguised a lot last year and did a lot of multiple looks, lots of stemming; they were trying to hide what they'd lost. They have a lot of guys coming back with game reps, so they should be closer to that 2017 defense that helped carry them in spots. … They've got a top-25 recruiting class at Purdue. That's a massive change for them, that's unheard of. The downside here is depth. They're talented enough at the top end to hang with anyone; that's what happened when they got the matchups they wanted to against Ohio State. The downside is that they're not deep enough to survive the season without slipping up here or there."

Wisconsin **Badgers**

National Forecast: **19** • Big Ten West Prediction: **3** • Projected Record: **8-4, 5-4 Big Ten**

Jonathan Taylor

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Paul Chryst
Record at School: 42-12 (4 years)
Career Record: 61-31 (7 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Joe Rudolph
Defensive Coordinator: Jim Leonhard
Location: Madison, WI
Stadium: Camp Randall Stadium (80,321)

KEY BADGERS

JONATHAN TAYLOR, RB Through two seasons at Wisconsin, Taylor already has amassed 4,171 rushing yards and 29 touchdowns.

TYLER BIADASZ, C The junior flirted with leaving for the NFL but decided to return. He is the only returning starter on the offensive line.

ZACK BAUN, OLB Baun led the Badgers with eight quarterback hurries last season and was third in tackles with 63.

KEY LOSSES

MICHAEL DEITER, OL A four-year fixture, Deiter played left tackle, left guard and center while finishing with a program-record 54 starts.

ALEC INGOLD, FB In addition to serving as Taylor's lead blocker, Ingold was efficient as a ball carrier in short-yardage situations.

T.J. EDWARDS, LB Started 52 games with the Badgers and produced a team-high 113 tackles and 11.5 tackles for a loss as a senior.

RISING STAR

Inside linebacker **JACK SANBORN,** a four-star recruit in 2018, played mostly on special teams as a true freshman. Now that T.J. Edwards and Ryan Connelly are gone, Sanborn will be counted on heavily in the middle of the Badgers defense.

Paul Chryst was 36–7 at Wisconsin when he arrived at Camp Randall Stadium for a mid-September game against BYU last season.

A 24–21 loss that day set the tone for a season that ended with an 8–5 record. A blowout win over Miami in the Pinstripe Bowl was a nice way to finish the year, but it didn't remove the underachieving label attached to a team that began the season ranked No. 4 in the nation and in the national title conversation.

Injuries to key players didn't help matters, but what bothered Chryst was that many of his team's issues were self-inflicted. Turnovers, uncharacteristic penalties and substandard quarterback play topped the list. "There were games I thought we didn't play good football," he says. "Another way of saying it, did you give yourselves a chance [to win]? There were times when we made it harder on ourselves."

Fixing that problem was one of the things that drove Chryst in the offseason as Wisconsin transitioned to a new era following departures in several key areas.

OFFENSE Tailback Jonathan Taylor, who rushed for 2,194 yards and 16 touchdowns as a sophomore, is a legitimate Heisman Trophy candidate entering what almost certainly will be his final season with the Badgers. While he needs to do a better job protecting the football and is taking steps toward becoming a more complete player, the fact that Taylor produced five games of 200-plus yards in 2018 was amazing considering there was little reason for opponents to respect the passing game.

While Chryst says there was plenty of blame to go around for the Badgers' ninth-place ranking in the Big Ten in pass efficiency, he's the first to admit that inconsistency at the quarterback position was a major factor. The Badgers went 26–6 over the past three seasons with Alex Hornibrook as a starter, but he regressed after a strong freshman campaign and left for Florida State as a graduate transfer.

Jack Coan has the inside track to step into the starting role, but fans are buzzing about the arrival of blue-chipper Graham Mertz. Coan was originally slated to redshirt last season but ended up appearing in five games, including three starts, and offered mostly uneven performances. While Mertz is dripping with talent, grasping Chryst's system in time to contribute as a true freshman won't be easy.

Chryst also emphasizes that the surrounding cast of receivers needs to make a jump, regardless of who's playing quarterback. There's plenty of potential in a group that includes A.J. Taylor, Danny Davis, Kendric Pryor and tight end Jake Ferguson, but inconsistency plagued that group as well.

Meanwhile, there'll be a complete makeover on the offensive line following the graduation of four-year starters Michael Deiter and Beau Benzschawel and the early departures of David Edwards (NFL) and Jon Dietzen (injuries). The Badgers got good news when center Ty-

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	30	at South Florida
Sept.	7	Central Michigan
Sept.	21	Michigan
Sept.	28	Northwestern
Oct.	5	Kent State
Oct.	12	Michigan State
Oct.	19	at Illinois
Oct.	26	at Ohio State
Nov.	9	Iowa
Nov.	16	at Nebraska
Nov.	23	Purdue
Nov.	30	at Minnesota

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 8-5, 5-4 BIG TEN

Aug.	31	Western Kentucky		W	34-3
Sept.	8	New Mexico		W	45-14
Sept.	15	BYU		L	21-24
Sept.	22	at Iowa		W	28-17
Oct.	6	Nebraska		W	41-24
Oct.	13	at Michigan		L	13-38
Oct.	20	Illinois		W	49-20
Oct.	27	at Northwestern		L	17-31
Nov.	3	Rutgers		W	31-17
Nov.	10	at Penn State		L	10-22
Nov.	17	at Purdue	(ot)	W	47-44
Nov.	24	Minnesota		L	15-37
Dec.	27	vs. Miami #		W	35-3

#Pinstripe Bowl

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	B1G	NATIONAL
Scoring	29.7 ppg	7	62
Rushing	273.4 ypg	1	6
Passing	157.7 ypg	12	119
Total	431.1 ypg	4	36
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**B1G**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	22.6 ppg	5	34
Rushing	155.1 ypg	5	54
Passing	189.1 ypg	5	22
Total	344.2 ypg	4	29
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**B1G**	**NATIONAL**
+1	+0.08	7	57

2019 RECRUITS

1. Logan Brown, OT, Grand Rapids, MI
2. Graham Mertz, QB, Leawood, KS
3. Joe Tippmann, OT, Fort Wayne, IN
4. Spencer Lytle, LB, Redondo Beach, CA
5. Rodas Johnson, DT, Columbus, OH
6. Hayden Rucci, TE, Lititz, PA
7. Titus Toler, S, Long Beach, CA
8. Maema Njongmeta, LB, Lincolnshire, IL
9. Julius Davis, RB, Menomonee Falls, WI
10. Leo Chenal, ATH, Frederic, WI
11. Semar Melvin, CB, Pembroke Pines, FL
12. Gio Paez, DT, Cornelius, NC
13. Dean Engram, CB, Columbia, MD
14. Skyler Meyers, LB, Blue Springs, MO
15. Clay Cundiff, TE, Wichita, KS
16. Stephan Bracey, WR, Grand Rapids, MI
17. James Williams, CB, Fort Lauderdale, FL
18. Keeanu Benton, DT, Janesville, WI
19. Quan Easterling, RB, Akron, OH

Recruits ranked according to the 247SportsComposite

Tom Lynn

ADVANCED STATS

5 Factors: College Football's Most Important Stats

Field Position[1]		Rank
Offense	31.2	35
Defense	30.7	100
Margin	+0.5	63

Efficiency[2]		Rank
Offense	50.8%	4
Defense	39.9%	50
Margin	+10.9%	6

Explosiveness[3]		Rank
Offense	6.4	16
Defense	5.5	51
Margin	+0.9	22

Finishing Drives[4]		Rank
Offense	5.2	18
Defense	3.9	24
Margin	+1.2	10

Adjusted TO Margin[5]		Rank
Projected	2.5	50
Actual	1	57
Margin	-1.5	81

KEY: **1**-Average starting field position by yard line; **2**-Rate of successful plays (gaining 50% of necessary yards on 1st down, 70% on 2nd down, 100% on 3rd down); **3**-Explosiveness=yards per play; **4**-Points per trip inside 40-yard line; **5**-TO margin accounting for "luck" • Advanced stats provided by Bill Connelly of SB Nation

NUMBERS TO KNOW

61/12

Wisconsin rushers gained at least four yards on 61 percent of their non-sack carries in 2018 (first in FBS) — Jonathan Taylor was at 64 percent — and got stuffed at or behind the line on just 12 percent (second).

+1.2

The Badgers were as good as ever in the red zone, too. They averaged 5.2 points per scoring opportunity (first downs inside the opponent's 40) and allowed 3.9 to opponents. The resulting plus-1.2 margin was 10th in FBS and first in the Big Ten.

5.5

UW's defense went from tremendous to merely good. The Badgers went from allowing 4.4 yards per play in 2017 (third in FBS) to 5.5 in 2018 (51st), a regression of 1.1 yards per play that was the 11th worst overall.

ler Biadasz returned for his junior season after flirting with the NFL, and left tackle Cole Van Lanen is a potential star. The rest of the line will be filled with players who are highly regarded by the coaching staff but have yet to play extensively in games.

DEFENSE The middle of the defense was a strength last season, at least when all the key parts were healthy.

The biggest losses are inside linebackers T.J. Edwards and Ryan Connelly, who made plays and covered up for weaknesses at other spots. Nose tackle Olive Sagapolu, strong safety D'Cota Dixon and outside linebacker Andrew Van Ginkel were also valuable contributors, but all three struggled with injuries as seniors.

What's left is plenty of question marks at all three levels. A front of Isaiahh Loudermilk, Bryson Williams and Garrett Rand would be formidable, but Rand missed all of last season with an Achilles injury, and there's not much established depth beyond those three players.

At linebacker, Chris Orr has starting experience on the inside and will be counted on for leadership. Outside linebacker Zack Baun was solid in his first season as a starter and could take another big step as a senior.

The Badgers have plenty of young talent returning in the back end. Defensive coordinator Jim Leonhard rotated a lot of players in 2018, but the coaching staff is waiting for two or three cornerbacks to emerge from that group and become dependable starters.

SPECIALISTS Rafael Gaglianone struggled as a senior last season, though he was a dependable four-year contributor, and his departure leaves a void at placekicker. Sophomore Collin Larsh is the most likely candidate for the role. The punting game was a disaster with Anthony Lotti and Connor Allen splitting time as the Badgers finished last in the Big Ten in net average in 2018.

FINAL ANALYSIS As great as Taylor is, he can't do it alone. After Wisconsin failed to reach double digits in victories for the first time in the Chryst era, a bounce-back season will require significant improvements at quarterback and on special teams. The Badgers also need several of their role players to take major jumps. That's a lot to ask.

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (3)

WR	4	A.J. Taylor (Sr.)	16	Jack Dunn (Jr.)
WR	6	Danny Davis (Jr.)	**3**	**Kendric Pryor (Jr.)**
LT	71	Cole Van Lanen (Jr.)	68	David Moorman (Sr.)
LG	78	Jason Erdmann (Sr.)	76	Kayden Lyles (So.)
C	**61**	**Tyler Biadasz (Jr.)**	76	Kayden Lyles (So.)
RG	60	Logan Bruss (So.)	70	Josh Seltzner (So.)
RT	65	Tyler Beach (So.)	68	David Moorman (Sr.)
TE	84	Jake Ferguson (So.)	86	Luke Benzschawel (Jr.)
QB	17	Jack Coan (Jr.)	15	Danny Vanden Boom (So.)
RB	**23**	**Jonathan Taylor (Jr.)**	37	Garrett Groshek (Jr.)
FB	23	Mason Stokke (Jr.)	44	John Chenal (So.)

DEFENSE (5)

Returning Starters in Bold

DE	97	Isaiahh Loudermilk (Jr.)	**92**	**Matt Henningsen (So.)**
NT	91	Bryson Williams (So.)	52	David Pfaff (Sr.)
DE	93	Garrett Rand (Jr.)	34	C.J. Goetz (Fr.)
OLB	**56**	**Zack Baun (Sr.)**	49	Christian Bell (Jr.)
MLB	54	Chris Orr (Sr.)	45	Leo Chenal (Fr.)
MLB	57	Jack Sanborn (So.)	58	Mike Maskalunas (Jr.)
OLB	41	Noah Burks (Jr.)	59	Tyler Johnson (Sr.)
CB	**1**	**Faion Hicks (So.)**	21	Caesar Williams (Jr.)
CB	**5**	**Rachad Wildgoose (So.)**	8	Deron Harrell (So.)
FS	**9**	**Scott Nelson (So.)**	2	Reggie Pearson (Fr.)
SS	25	Eric Burrell (Jr.)	18	Collin Wilder (Jr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	19	Collin Larsh (So.)	KR	1	Aron Cruickshank (So.)
P	15	Anthony Lotti (Sr.)	PR	16	Jack Dunn (Jr.)

2018 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Alex Hornibrook	205	122	1,532	13	11
Jack Coan	**93**	**56**	**515**	**5**	**3**

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD
Jonathan Taylor	**307**	**2,194**	**7.1**	**16**
Taiwan Deal	82	545	6.6	6
Garrett Groshek	**65**	**425**	**6.5**	**1**
Alec Ingold	26	143	5.5	6

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Danny Davis	**40**	**418**	**10.5**	**5**
Jake Ferguson	**36**	**456**	**12.7**	**4**
A.J. Taylor	**32**	**521**	**16.3**	**3**
Garrett Groshek	**24**	**163**	**6.8**	**1**

KICKING: Rafael Gaglianone, 10-17 FGs, 78 pts.
TACKLES: T.J. Edwards, 113; Ryan Connelly, 89
SACKS: Andrew Van Ginkel, 5.5
INTERCEPTIONS: T.J. Edwards, 3

Returning Players in **Bold**

SCOUTING THE BADGERS

OPPOSING COACHES SIZE UP WISCONSIN

"That's still who everyone is shooting for in the West. They're the bell cow of the division even after an off year. They have been and will continue to be outstanding at the offensive line position, but they do have work to do replacing those guys. Still though, they're a national brand at that position, and it shows. Jonathan Taylor is a great back, and with how physical that line can be and how much they can control a game in that one aspect, you don't really have to have an elite-level guy at quarterback to make it work. Taylor is as good a running back as in any in the country. They're not an exceptional passing team because they don't have to be. They'll just run you over. … They mask pre-snap really well, lots of shifts and motions to try to outnumber you. They're doing that just as much to run on you as another team would to get a matchup in the passing game. They can shift-motion into the running lane they want most. … Defensively, Jim Leonhard has them playing their butts off. They were definitely young in the back end, at corner especially. They're kind of built to stop their own offense more than anything else. It's a 3-4 with a big down three, and their outside backers are massive, 250-plus-sized kids. … Their lack of a passing game hurt them more than they thought it would. You could load the box on them."

C-USA Preview

East	Predicted Order of Finish	West
1 *Marshall* **THUNDERING HERD** 9-4, 6-2 C-USA		1 *North Texas* **MEAN GREEN** 8-5, 7-1 C-USA
2 *FIU* **PANTHERS** 8-4, 6-2 C-USA		2 *Southern Miss* **GOLDEN EAGLES** 8-4, 6-2 C-USA
3 *FAU* **OWLS** 7-5, 5-3 C-USA		3 *UAB* **BLAZERS** 8-4, 5-3 C-USA
4 *MTSU* **BLUE RAIDERS** 6-6, 5-3 C-USA		4 *Louisiana Tech* **BULLDOGS** 7-4, 4-4 C-USA
5 *WKU* **HILLTOPPERS** 4-8, 3-5 C-USA		5 *UTSA* **ROADRUNNERS** 4-8, 3-5 C-USA
6 *Charlotte* **49ERS** 4-8, 2-6 C-USA		6 *UTEP* **MINERS** 2-10, 1-7 C-USA
7 *Old Dominion* **MONARCHS** 3-9, 2-6 C-USA		7 *Rice* **OWLS** 1-11, 1-7 C-USA

Conference USA Championship: **Marshall over North Texas**

Games to Watch

AUG. 31
FAU AT OHIO STATE
Lane Kiffin's club laid an egg in its marquee Week 1 game last season, falling 63–14 at Oklahoma. The goal in Columbus is to be competitive.

SEPT. 6
MARSHALL AT BOISE STATE
The league's top team heads out West to face the preseason favorite in the Mountain West in a Friday night showdown.

SEPT. 7
SOUTHERN MISS AT MISS. STATE
Southern Miss won 10 of 12 against MSU during one stretch in the 1970s and '80s — but times have changed for both programs.

SEPT. 14
DUKE AT MIDDLE TENNESSEE
The Middle Tennessee administration has done a nice job getting Power 5 teams to visit Murfreesboro. Too bad Brent Stockstill is no longer at QB.

SEPT. 14
WKU VS. LOUISVILLE
These two Kentucky schools will meet for only the second time ever. The Cards edged the Toppers 20–17 in Louisville last September.

SEPT. 20
FIU AT LA. TECH
This is a big early-season league game for a pair of teams that should be in contention in their respective divisions.

FAU Athletics; North Texas Athletics

2019 Unit Rankings

	QB	RB	WR/TE	OL	DL	LB	DB
CHARLOTTE	10	2	10	11	5	2	11
FAU	7	12	6	3	6	6	5
FIU	2	4	2	2	10	5	2
LOUISIANA TECH	5	9	7	6	3	9	1
MARSHALL	3	5	3	1	1	4	4
MTSU	12	6	5	10	7	3	7
NORTH TEXAS	1	3	1	5	9	10	9
OLD DOMINION	9	8	11	13	13	7	12
RICE	14	13	9	14	14	11	13
SOUTHERN MISS	6	10	8	8	2	8	3
UAB	4	1	13	7	11	1	6
UTEP	11	11	14	9	12	14	14
UTSA	13	14	12	12	4	13	10
WKU	8	7	4	4	8	12	8

Recruiting by School

1. FAU
2. Marshall
3. North Texas
4. Southern Miss
5. Middle Tennessee
6. UAB
7. FIU
8. Louisiana Tech
9. WKU
10. UTSA
11. UTEP
12. Old Dominion
13. Rice
14. Charlotte

Rico Bussey Jr., North Texas

Harrison Bryant, FAU

2019 Bowl Projections

New Orleans Bowl: Marshall vs. Appalachian State
First Responder Bowl: North Texas vs. TCU
Birmingham Bowl: Southern Miss vs. Houston
New Mexico Bowl: UAB vs. Fresno State
Independence Bowl: Louisiana Tech vs. Boston College
Gasparilla Bowl: FIU vs. Cincinnati
Bahamas Bowl: FAU vs. Northern Illinois

C-USA Coordinator Carousel

Charlotte: Offense
New: Alex Atkins
Old: Shane Montgomery

Charlotte: Defense
New: Brandon Cooper, Marcus West
Old: Glenn Spencer, Chip West

FAU: Defense
New: Glenn Spencer
Old: Tony Pecoraro

FIU: Defense
New: Jeff Copp, Jerod Kruse
Old: Brent Guy

Louisiana Tech: Defense
New: Bob Diaco
Old: Blake Baker

Marshall: Offense
New: Tim Cramsey
Old: Tim Cramsey, Todd Goebbel

Marshall: Defense
New: J.C. Price, Brad Lambert
Old: Adam Fuller

Old Dominion: Defense
New: David Blackwell
Old: Rich Nagy

North Texas: Offense
New: Tommy Mainord, Bodie Reeder
Old: Graham Harrell

Southern Miss: Offense
New: Buster Faulkner, Scotty Walden
Old: Shannon Dawson

UTSA: Offense
New: Jeff Kastl
Old: Al Borges

WKU: Offense
New: Bryan Ellis
Old: Junior Adams

SEPT. 28
FAU AT CHARLOTTE
It could be a rough season at Charlotte, but remember the name Will Healy; the 49ers' new boss is a rising star in the coaching world.

OCT. 12
NORTH TEXAS AT SOUTHERN MISS
This is a key game in the West Division race. North Texas held the Eagles to a season-low seven points in a win in Denton last season.

NOV. 9
NORTH TEXAS AT LA. TECH
North Texas opened the 2018 season with a 4–0 mark (highlighted by a win at Arkansas) before losing at home to Louisiana Tech 29–27.

NOV. 15
LA. TECH AT MARSHALL
These two programs have not played since Marshall knocked off Tech in 2014 Conference USA Championship Game in Huntington.

NOV. 30
FIU AT MARSHALL
The C-USA East title and a spot in the league title game could be on the line when FIU makes the trip to Huntington.

NOV. 30
MIDDLE TENNESSEE AT WKU
This is an intriguing regional rivalry that dates back to the days when both programs were in the Division I-AA ranks.

Benny LeMay, Charlotte

C-USA Returning Leaders

Passing	ATT	COMP	PCT	YDS	TD	INT	AVG/G
Mason Fine, North Texas	469	303	64.6	3,793	27	5	291.8
Jack Abraham, Southern Miss	305	223	73.1	2,347	15	10	260.8
Isaiah Green, Marshall	330	187	56.7	2,459	15	10	245.9

Rushing	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD	LONG	AVG/G
Benny LeMay, Charlotte	232	1,243	5.4	11	58	103.6
Spencer Brown, UAB	272	1,227	4.5	16	30	87.6
DeAndre Torrey, North Texas	175	977	5.6	15	92	75.2

Receiving	REC	YDS	AVG	TD	LONG	AVG/G
Adrian Hardy, Louisiana Tech	75	1,145	15.3	6	54	88.1
Rico Bussey, North Texas	68	1,017	15.0	12	68	84.8
Victor Tucker, Charlotte	54	712	13.2	2	67	72.8

Tackles: Sage Lewis, FIU (132), Reed Blankenship, Middle Tennessee (107)
Sacks: Ty Tyler, Marshall (9.0), LaDarius Hamilton, North Texas (7.5), Channing Hames, Marshall (7.5)
Interceptions: Ky'el Hemby, Southern Miss (6)

2018 C-USA Standings

EAST	C-USA	OVERALL	WEST	C-USA	OVERALL
Middle Tennessee	7-1	8-6	UAB	7-1	11-3
Marshall	6-2	9-4	North Texas	5-3	9-4
FIU	6-2	9-4	Louisiana Tech	5-3	8-5
Charlotte	4-4	5-7	Southern Miss	5-3	6-5
FAU	3-5	5-7	UTSA	2-6	3-9
Old Dominion	2-6	4-8	Rice	1-7	2-11
WKU	2-6	3-9	UTEP	1-7	1-11

2018 Bowl Results

New Mexico Bowl: Utah State 52, North Texas 13

Hawaii Bowl: Louisiana Tech 31, Hawaii 14

Gasparilla Bowl: Marshall 38, South Florida 20

Bahamas Bowl: FIU 35, Toledo 32

New Orleans Bowl: Appalachian State 45, Middle Tennessee 13

Boca Raton Bowl: UAB 37, Northern Illinois 13

2018 C-USA Team Stats & Rankings

Offense

	SCORING	RUSH	PASS	TOTAL
Charlotte	21.7 (10)	162.6 (5)	180.5 (12)	343.1 (11)
FAU	31.1 (3)	241.8 (1)	237.0 (7)	478.8 (1)
FIU	34.6 (1T)	175.9 (3)	245.7 (6)	421.5 (4)
Louisiana Tech	24.7 (9)	129.6 (11)	249.7 (5)	379.3 (8)
Marshall	28.2 (6)	165.5 (4)	228.1 (8)	393.6 (6)
Middle Tennessee	28.0 (7)	132.6 (9)	260.7 (3)	393.4 (7)
North Texas	34.6 (1T)	153.8 (6)	306.8 (1)	460.5 (2)
Old Dominion	30.8 (4)	130.8 (10)	297.0 (2)	427.8 (3)
Rice	18.9 (12)	143.6 (7)	174.8 (13)	318.4 (12)
Southern Miss	26.2 (8)	112.6 (13)	255.0 (4)	367.6 (9)
UAB	29.9 (5)	201.3 (2)	204.4 (10)	405.7 (5)
UTEP	17.7 (13)	123.7 (12)	184.0 (11)	307.7 (13)
UTSA	14.2 (14)	87.3 (14)	159.8 (14)	247.1 (14)
Western Kentucky	21.1 (11)	136.8 (8)	226.8 (9)	363.7 (10)

Defense

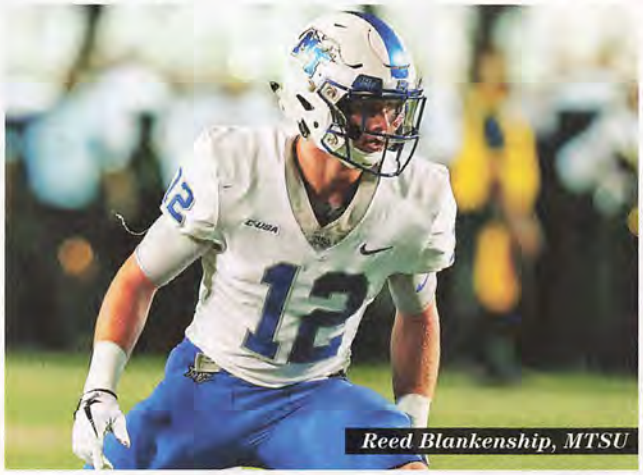
	SCORING	RUSH	PASS	TOTAL
Charlotte	26.6 (7)	105.7 (3)	231.7 (7)	337.3 (3)
FAU	31.8 (11)	186.0 (11)	238.4 (9)	424.4 (11)
FIU	25.2 (6)	192.2 (12)	194.1 (4)	386.3 (8)
Louisiana Tech	23.0 (4)	149.7 (6)	191.6 (3)	341.3 (5)
Marshall	21.8 (3)	104.2 (2)	234.5 (8)	338.7 (4)
Middle Tennessee	26.7 (8)	164.6 (8)	213.2 (6)	377.9 (7)
North Texas	24.2 (5)	119.9 (5)	254.8 (11)	374.6 (6)
Old Dominion	35.9 (13)	216.4 (14)	255.0 (12)	471.4 (14)
Rice	36.0 (14)	166.0 (9)	280.1 (14)	446.1 (13)
Southern Miss	19.8 (2)	102.7 (1)	175.6 (1)	278.4 (1)
UAB	17.0 (1)	118.1 (4)	181.1 (2)	299.2 (2)
UTEP	32.8 (12)	195.8 (13)	198.9 (5)	394.7 (9)
UTSA	31.2 (10)	160.3 (7)	275.3 (13)	435.5 (12)
Western Kentucky	27.8 (9)	172.8 (10)	248.8 (10)	421.6 (10)

ALL-C-USA TEAM

First-Team Offense

QB	**Mason Fine**	5-11	185	Sr.	North Texas
RB	**Spencer Brown**	6-0	220	Jr.	UAB
RB	**Benny LeMay**	5-9	218	Sr.	Charlotte
AP	**Ty Lee**	5-9	178	Sr.	MTSU
WR	**Rico Bussey Jr.**	6-2	190	Sr.	North Texas
WR	**Adrian Hardy**	6-2	193	Jr.	Louisiana Tech
TE	**Harrison Bryant**	6-5	240	Sr.	FAU
C	**Levi Brown**	6-4	284	Sr.	Marshall
OL	**Cameron Clark**	6-5	296	Sr.	Charlotte
OL	**Manase Mose**	6-1	294	So.	North Texas
OL	**Miles Pate**	6-2	315	Sr.	WKU
OL	**Ethan Reed**	6-4	295	Sr.	Louisiana Tech

Mason Fine, North Texas


Reed Blankenship, MTSU

First-Team Defense

DL	**LaDarius Hamilton**	6-3	255	Sr.	North Texas
DL	**Alex Highsmith**	6-3	244	Sr.	Charlotte
DL	**Jacques Turner**	6-1	247	Jr.	Southern Miss
DL	**Ty Tyler**	6-3	251	Sr.	Marshall
LB	**Racheem Boothe**	6-0	210	Jr.	Southern Miss
LB	**Khalil Brooks**	5-11	206	Sr.	MTSU
LB	**Sage Lewis**	6-1	240	Sr.	FIU
CB	**Brontae Harris**	5-10	190	Jr.	UAB
CB	**Amik Robertson**	5-9	180	Jr.	Louisiana Tech
S	**Reed Blankenship**	6-1	195	Jr.	MTSU
S	**Ben DeLuca**	6-1	201	Sr.	Charlotte

First-Team Specialists

K	**Jonathan Cruz**	5-9	170	So.	Charlotte
P	**Alvin Kenworthy**	6-3	194	Sr.	North Texas
KR	**DeAndre Torrey**	5-7	185	Jr.	North Texas
PR	**Maurice Alexander**	5-11	180	Sr.	FIU

SECOND-TEAM OFFENSE

QB	**James Morgan**	6-4	213	Sr.	FIU
RB	**Brenden Knox**	6-0	223	So.	Marshall
RB	**DeAndre Torrey**	5-7	185	Jr.	North Texas
AP	**Anthony Jones**	5-11	215	Sr.	FIU
WR	**Lucky Jackson**	6-1	185	Sr.	WKU
WR	**Austin Maloney**	5-11	190	Sr.	FIU
TE	**Armani Levias**	6-4	257	Sr.	Marshall
C	**Sosaia Mose**	6-2	301	Sr.	North Texas
OL	**Dallas Connell**	6-3	300	Sr.	FIU
OL	**D'Antne Demery**	6-5	320	Jr.	FIU
OL	**Arvin Fletcher**	6-3	310	Jr.	Southern Miss
OL	**Brandon Walton**	6-5	300	Sr.	FAU

SECOND-TEAM DEFENSE

DL	**Willie Baker**	6-3	251	Jr.	Louisiana Tech
DL	**Channing Hames**	6-5	268	Sr.	Marshall
DL	**DeAngelo Malone**	6-4	230	Jr.	WKU
DL	**Garrett Marino**	6-2	290	Sr.	UAB
LB	**Jeff Gemmell**	6-3	234	Sr.	Charlotte
LB	**Rashad Smith**	6-1	215	Sr.	FAU
LB	**DQ Thomas**	6-2	215	Jr.	MTSU
CB	**Chris Jackson**	6-0	187	Sr.	Marshall
CB	**Stantley Thomas-Oliver III**	6-2	184	Sr.	FIU
S	**Ta'Corian Darden**	5-9	190	Sr.	WKU
S	**Ky'el Hemby**	6-1	195	Jr.	Southern Miss

SECOND-TEAM SPECIALISTS

K	**Jose Borregales**	5-10	206	Jr.	FIU
P	**Bailey Cate**	6-4	200	Sr.	Old Dominion
KR	**Austin Trammell**	5-10	182	Jr.	Rice
PR	**Jaelon Darden**	5-9	165	Jr.	North Texas

James Morgan
FIU

Tyler Johnston III
UAB

Brenden Knox
Marshall

Rashad Smith
FAU

THIRD-TEAM OFFENSE

QB	**Tyler Johnston III**	6-2	215	So.	UAB
RB	**BJ Emmons**	6-0	230	Jr.	FAU
RB	**Chaton Mobley**	6-1	235	So.	MTSU
AP	**Kesean Strong**	5-10	195	Sr.	Old Dominion
WR	**Victor Tucker**	5-11	182	So.	Charlotte
WR	**Willie Wright**	5-8	155	Jr.	FAU
TE	**Kyle Fourtenbary**	6-3	240	Jr.	WKU
C	**Lee Dufour**	6-4	310	Sr.	UAB
OL	**Josh Fannin**	6-3	266	Sr.	MTSU
OL	**Kody Russey**	6-1	285	Jr.	Louisiana Tech
OL	**Tyler Witt**	6-2	305	Jr.	WKU
OL	**Isaac Weaver**	6-6	290	Jr.	Old Dominion

THIRD-TEAM DEFENSE

DL	**Noah Curtis**	6-5	248	Jr.	FIU
DL	**Lorenzo Dantzler**	6-2	245	Jr.	UTSA
DL	**Noah Jefferson**	6-5	330	Sr.	FAU
DL	**Malik Manciel**	6-3	255	Sr.	MTSU
LB	**Omari Cobb**	6-4	226	Sr.	Marshall
LB	**Kris Moll**	6-1	200	Jr.	UAB
LB	**Fitzgerald Mofor**	6-0	240	Sr.	UAB
CB	**Rachuan Mitchell**	5-11	190	Jr.	Southern Miss
CB	**L'Jarius Sneed**	6-1	191	Sr.	Louisiana Tech
S	**Richard Dames**	5-11	185	Jr.	FIU
S	**Jovante Moffatt**	6-0	216	Sr.	MTSU

THIRD-TEAM SPECIALISTS

K	**Nick Vogel**	5-10	190	Sr.	UAB
P	**Kyle Greenwell**	6-1	210	So.	UAB
KR	**De'Michael Harris**	5-9	175	Sr.	Southern Miss
PR	**Tyler King**	6-0	190	Jr.	Marshall

Charlotte Athletics; North Texas Athletics; MTSU Athletics; FIU Athletics; UAB Athletics; Marshall Athletics; FAU Athletics

Charlotte **49ers**

National Forecast: **112** • C-USA East Prediction: **6** • Projected Record: **4-8, 2-6 C-USA**

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	Gardner-Webb
Sept.	7	at Appalachian State
Sept.	14	Massachusetts
Sept.	21	at Clemson
Sept.	28	Florida Atlantic
Oct.	12	at FIU
Oct.	19	at Western Kentucky
Oct.	26	North Texas
Nov.	2	Middle Tennessee
Nov.	9	at UTEP
Nov.	23	Marshall
Nov.	30	at Old Dominion

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 5-7, 4-4 C-USA

Sept.	1	Fordham	W	34-10
Sept.	8	Appalachian State	L	9-45
Sept.	13	Old Dominion	W	28-25
Sept.	22	at Massachusetts	L	31-49
Sept.	29	at UAB	L	7-28
Oct.	13	Western Kentucky	W	40-14
Oct.	20	at Middle Tennessee	L	13-21
Oct.	27	Southern Miss	W	20-17
Nov.	3	at Tennessee	L	3-14
Nov.	10	at Marshall	L	13-30
Nov.	17	FIU	L	35-42
Nov.	24	at Florida Atlantic	W	27-24

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Noah Henderson, WR, Nashville, TN
2. Jaylon Sharpe, LB, Charlotte, NC
3. Trey Bly, CB, Charlotte, NC
4. Jaxon Hughes, DE, Greensboro, NC
5. Micaleous Elder, WR, Murfreesboro, TN
6. Rhett Read, TE, Buffalo, TX*
7. Bryson Whitehead, CB, Cornelius, NC
8. Tre Goode, WR, Jamestown, NC
9. Jaylan Williams, TE, Acworth, GA
10. Yontez Jarrell, OT, Jacksonville, FL

*junior college transfer

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	C-USA	NATIONAL
Scoring	21.7 ppg	10	114
Rushing	162.6 ypg	5	73
Passing	180.5 ypg	12	107
Total	343.1 ypg	11	116
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**C-USA**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	26.6 ppg	7	60
Rushing	105.7 ypg	3	9
Passing	231.7 ypg	7	67
Total	337.3 ypg	3	22
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**C-USA**	**NATIONAL**
+1	+0.08	6	57

STAT CORNER

+13.7

It wasn't enough, but Charlotte's average scoring margin improved from minus-18.6 to minus-4.9 in 2018, a 13.7-point shift.

OFFENSE New coach Will Healy inherits a team with plenty of question marks, but a small-but-crucial handful of program mainstays, too. Chief among them is senior running back Benny LeMay, who earned second-team all-conference honors after averaging 102.3 rushing yards per game last season. Expect LeMay and fellow rusher Aaron McAllister to receive plenty of work.

There's much less clarity at quarterback, where grad student Evan Shirreffs and sophomore Chris Reynolds return after seeing significant action last season. They join a group of potential starters that includes redshirt freshman Brady Pope and Brett Kean, a graduate transfer from South Florida.

The receiving corps will be led by Victor Tucker, who earned a spot on the C-USA All-Freshman Team after amassing 712 yards last season. Healy expects Cameron Dollar, Cameron Bent and Rico Arnold to make up a solid corps of receivers.

Team captain Cameron Clark returns after earning all-conference honors at tackle last season. Around Clark and veteran center Jaelin Fisher, the 49ers have an offensive line that features potential but a degree of uncertainty, as players such as junior Austin Lee and sophomore D'Mitri Emmanuel will play larger roles than they have in the past.

DEFENSE Healy brings in a 4-2-5 look to a unit that ranked 22nd in total defense in the FBS last season. End Alex Highsmith, an all-conference first-teamer last season, anchors a defensive line that also boasts proven performers in end Tyriq Harris and tackle Timmy Horne.

Senior linebacker Jeff Gemmell, who had 87 stops last season, has impressed the new staff. And with veterans Anthony Butler and Darius Irvin and some solid freshmen, this unit should be a team strength.

Meanwhile, Healy says he expects safety Ben DeLuca, last season's leading tackler, to again be a defensive leader. While returning contributors DJ Anderson and Marquavis Gibbs provide stability, the secondary does have its share of questions, as Healy says several spots are up for grabs.

SPECIALISTS After hitting 17 field goals last season, Jonathan Cruz gives the 49ers one of the league's top kickers. Kyle Corbett should resume his punting duties after averaging 41 yards per kick a year ago. McAllister should return kicks, while the punt return slot is open for competition.

FINAL ANALYSIS Before Healy took the reins at Austin Peay in 2016, the Governors had won just one of their previous 35 games. The situation he inherits at Charlotte, where he replaces Brad Lambert (the program's first coach), is a dream by comparison. "The players have won some games here, which makes it very different," Healy says. "They have experience being competitive."

While Healy sees potential with the team he will lead on the field this season, he sees room for improvement off of it. Enthusiasm for the program has waned, so Healy has made connecting with the program's fans, donors and recruits a major priority.

"Charlotte football is not relevant enough in its own city," Healy says. "We've got to make sure we get more people to the games and get in front of community members if we're to get our program to the next level."

Benny LeMay

"Brad Lambert's firing surprised a lot of people. Will Healy is going to have a tough time at first because he needs to build a new identity with those kids."

— An opposing C-USA assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

Returning Starters in Bold

OFFENSE (5)				
WR	2	Cameron Bent (So.)	21	Rico Arnold (So.)
WR	**9**	**Victor Tucker (So.)**	89	Tre Goode (Fr.)
WR	4	Cameron Dollar (So.)	82	Zach Gemmell (So.)
LT	**71**	**Cameron Clark (Sr.)**	69	Dejan Rasuo (Fr.)
LG	53	Jalen Allen (Sr.)	66	Philip Walton (Sr.)
C	**68**	**Jaelin Fisher (Jr.)**	79	Dalton Widner (Fr.)
RG	70	D'Mitri Emmanuel (So.)	76	Jonathan Timmons (Jr.)
RT	75	Dominic Taylor (Sr.)	62	Austin Lee (Jr.)
TE	85	Ryan Carriere (Jr.)	88	Jacob Hunt (So.)
QB	**17**	**Chris Reynolds (So.)**	16	Evan Shirreffs (Sr.)
RB	**32**	**Benny LeMay (Sr.)**	5	Aaron McAllister (Jr.)
DEFENSE (8)				
DE	**5**	**Alex Highsmith (Sr.)**	14	Michael Holmes (Sr.)
DT	**98**	**Timmy Horne (Jr.)**	91	Dantrell Barkley (Jr.)
DT	90	Tommy Doctor (Sr.)	61	Ernest King (So.)
DE	**10**	**Tyriq Harris (Sr.)**	97	Damon Weldon (Fr.)
LB	**34**	**Jeff Gemmell (Sr.)**	3	Darius Irvin (Sr.)
LB	**7**	**Anthony Butler (Sr.)**	56	Will Graham (Jr.)
CB	**20**	**DJ Anderson (Sr.)**	36	Robert Cheatem (Jr.)
CB	**8**	**Nafees Lyon (Sr.)**	6	Marquill Osborne (Sr.)
SS	15	Marquavis Gibbs (Sr.)	9	Quinton Jordan (Sr.)
FS	**28**	**Ben DeLuca (Sr.)**	22	JT Starr (Jr.)
S	26	Jacione Fugate (Jr.)	42	Henry Segura (So.)
SPECIAL TEAMS				
K	11	Jonathan Cruz (So.)	KR 5	Aaron McAllister (Jr.)
P	39	Kyle Corbett (Jr.)	PR 9	Victor Tucker (So.)

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Chris Reynolds, 154-100-1,173-2, 6 TDs
Rushing: Benny LeMay, 232 att., 1,243 yds., 11 TDs
Receiving: Victor Tucker, 54 rec., 712 yds. 2 TDs
Tackles: Ben DeLuca, 92
Sacks: Jeff Gemmell, 4.0
Interceptions: Three players tied with 1

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Will Healy
Record at School: First Season
Career Record: 13-21 (3 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Alex Atkins
Defensive Coordinator: Brandon Cooper, Marcus West
Charlotte, NC • Jerry Richardson Stadium (15,314)

Charlotte Athletics

Florida Atlantic **Owls**

National Forecast: **94** • C-USA East Prediction: **3** • Projected Record: **7-5, 5-3 C-USA**

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	at Ohio State
Sept.	7	UCF
Sept.	14	at Ball State
Sept.	21	Wagner
Sept.	28	at Charlotte
Oct.	12	Middle Tennessee
Oct.	18	Marshall
Oct.	26	at Old Dominion
Nov.	2	at Western Kentucky
Nov.	9	FIU
Nov.	23	at UTSA
Nov.	30	Southern Miss

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 5-7, 3-5 C-USA

Sept.	1	at Oklahoma	L	14-63
Sept.	8	Air Force	W	33-27
Sept.	15	Bethune-Cookman	W	49-28
Sept.	21	at UCF	L	36-56
Sept.	29	at Middle Tenn.	L	24-25
Oct.	6	Old Dominion	W	52-33
Oct.	20	at Marshall	L	7-31
Oct.	26	Louisiana Tech	L	13-21
Nov.	3	at FIU	W	49-14
Nov.	10	Western Kentucky	W	34-15
Nov.	15	at North Texas	L	38-41
Nov.	24	Charlotte	L	24-27

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Cameron Wynn, WR, Chattanooga, TN
2. Diamante Howard, OLB, Perrine, FL
3. Latrell Jean, DE, Lakeland, FL
4. JD Martin, WR, Wetumpka, AL
5. Tye Edwards, ATH, Saint Augustine, FL
6. La'Darius Henry, S, Saint Petersburg, FL
7. Travon Thomas, DE, Miami, FL
8. Larry McCammon, RB, Hoover, AL
9. Kelvin Dean, RB, Tallahassee, FL
10. Dorien Josey, DE, Rockledge, FL

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	C-USA	NATIONAL
Scoring	31.1 ppg	3	45
Rushing	241.8 ypg	1	13
Passing	237.0 ypg	7	64
Total	478.8 ypg	1	14
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**C-USA**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	31.8 ppg	11	92
Rushing	186.0 ypg	11	88
Passing	238.4 ypg	9	79
Total	424.4 ypg	11	85
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**C-USA**	**NATIONAL**
-7	-0.58	13	113

STAT CORNER

-0.7

FAU averaged 0.7 fewer points per trip inside the opponent's 40 in 2018 and allowed 0.6 points more, a huge one-year shift.

OFFENSE Three early entrants into the NFL Draft left FAU scrambling to identify key contributors for 2019. The Owls expected running back Devin Singletary and his 66 touchdowns over three seasons to make the leap. That Singletary's backup, Kerrith Whyte, and leading wide receiver Jovon Durante also departed early was a surprise.

BJ Emmons began his collegiate career at Alabama playing for then-offensive coordinator Lane Kiffin. He'll get the first chance to replace Singletary. As FAU's coach, Kiffin toggles between multiple running backs in his up-tempo offense, and James Charles actually out-performed Emmons during the spring.

Durante's decision to leave became part of a flood of defections from the wide receiver unit. Four other wideouts departed the program, leaving the Owls shockingly thin at the position.

FAU also lacks stability at quarterback. Kiffin didn't specify why he suspended sophomore starter Chris Robison for the entire spring. Robison transferred to FAU after being kicked out of Oklahoma following an arrest for public intoxication.

Sophomore Nick Tronti, an Indiana transfer, commanded the offense in Robison's absence and will challenge the incumbent come fall. Former Kent State QB Justin Agner also factors in the mix.

For stability, look to the tight ends. Nine of senior Harrison Bryant's 83 career catches have been for scores. He has an NFL future. John Raine owns good hands. The lack of depth at wide receiver will lead to many two-tight end sets.

DEFENSE Kiffin is on his third defensive coordinator in three seasons, having replaced Tony Pecoraro with Glenn Spencer, most recently of Charlotte. The Owls took a major step backward in Pecoraro's lone season.

Linebacker Azeez Al-Shaair, FAU's career tackling leader, exhausted his eligibility. He'll be replaced by Akileis Leroy. The star of this defense will be senior outside linebacker Rashad Smith. As a junior, he led FAU in tackles and interceptions.

Players have embraced Spencer's read-and-react schemes. Former USC Trojan Noah Jefferson and junior college transfer Charles Cameron are disruptive forces in the middle of FAU's four-man front.

Cornerbacks Chris Tooley and James Pierre have all-conference potential. Strong safety Zyon Gilbert is a future NFL player.

SPECIALISTS FAU did little in the offseason to remedy an inconsistent kicking game. Vladimir Rivas returns, having made only 10-of-17 field goal attempts with a long of 44 yards. Freshman walk-on Logan McLeod is expected to challenge Rivas during fall camp. The Owls will be looking to replace Whyte, owner of the program's only two kickoff returns for touchdowns. Punter Sebastian Riella averaged 38.1 yards on his 38 attempts.

FINAL ANALYSIS Everything went right for FAU in Kiffin's first season. That wasn't the case last year, when the Owls found a variety of ways to lose games they should have won.

The defense is loaded with athletes and appears to have taken to the new scheme, so it should be improved. Offensively, there are so many new faces that it may take a few games to achieve consistent production. Bowl eligibility is certainly within reach.

Rashad Smith

"They have talent at the right places. They have the most team speed in C-USA, especially on defense. But that offense got messy last year."

— An opposing C-USA assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (6)				Returning Starters in Bold
WR	85	John Mitchell (Sr.)	83	James Brunson (Sr.)
WR	82	Tavaris Harrison (Sr.)	81	Jordan Merrell (So.)
SLOT	1	**Willie Wright (Jr.)**	84	Ladante Harris (Sr.)
LT	73	**Brandon Walton (Sr.)**	72	Doug Johnson Jr. (Fr.)
LG	76	**BJ Etienne (So.)**	68	Lavante Epson (Jr.)
C	51	**Junior Diaz (Sr.)**	71	Jake Jones (Jr.)
RG	63	Nick Weber (So.)	74	Deon Humphrey (So.)
RT		Calvin Ashley (So.)	75	Marquice Robinson (Fr.)
TE	40	**Harrison Bryant (Sr.)**	10	John Raine (Sr.)
QB	2	**Chris Robison (So.)**	15	Nick Tronti (So.)
RB	34	BJ Emmons (Jr.)	28	James Charles (Jr.)
DEFENSE (5)				
DE	45	Tim Bonner (Sr.)	92	Marcel Southall (Jr.)
DT	91	Noah Jefferson (Sr.)	11	Ray Ellis (Sr.)
DT	98	Charles Cameron (Sr.)	42	William Davis (Sr.)
DE	13	**Leighton McCarthy (Jr.)**	55	Damian Horton (Sr.)
OLB	7	**Rashad Smith (Sr.)**	54	Hosea Barnwell V (Jr.)
MLB	36	Akileis Leroy (Jr.)	25	Chase Lasater (So.)
NB	9	**Quran Hafiz (Jr.)**	29	Korel Smith (Jr.)
CB	23	**James Pierre (Jr.)**	12	Diashun Moss (Jr.)
CB	26	Chris Tooley (Sr.)	15	Meiko Dotson (Sr.)
S	24	**Zyon Gilbert (Jr.)**	30	Armani Adams (Fr.)
S	27	Da'Von Brown (Sr.)	32	Teja Young (So.)
SPECIAL TEAMS				
K	42	Vladimir Rivas (So.)	KR 1	Willie Wright (Jr.)
P	96	Sebastian Riella (So.)	PR 87	Dante Cousart (Sr.)

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Chris Robison, 304-192-2,540-12, 12 TDs
Rushing: Chris Robison, 73 att., 211 yds., 3 TDs
Receiving: Willie Wright, 46 rec., 474 yds., 2 TDs
Tackles: Rashad Smith, 86
Sacks: Tim Bonner, 3.0
Interceptions: Rashad Smith, 4

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Lane Kiffin
Record at School: 16-10 (2 years)
Career Record: 51-31 (6+ years)
Offensive Coordinator: Charlie Weis Jr.
Defensive Coordinator: Glenn Spencer
Boca Raton, FL • FAU Stadium (29,495)

JC Ridley

FIU **Panthers**

National Forecast: **90** • C-USA East Prediction: **2** • Projected Record: **8-4, 6-2 C-USA**

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	29	at Tulane
Sept.	7	Western Kentucky
Sept.	14	New Hampshire
Sept.	20	at Louisiana Tech
Oct.	5	Massachusetts
Oct.	12	Charlotte
Oct.	19	UTEP
Oct.	26	at Middle Tennessee
Nov.	2	Old Dominion
Nov.	9	at Florida Atlantic
Nov.	23	Miami (Fla.)
Nov.	30	at Marshall

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 9-4, 6-2 C-USA

Sept.	1	Indiana	L	28-38
Sept.	8	at Old Dominion	W	28-20
Sept.	15	Massachusetts	W	63-24
Sept.	22	at Miami (Fla.)	L	17-31
Sept.	29	Arkansas-Pine Bluff	W	55-9
Oct.	13	Middle Tennessee	W	24-21
Oct.	20	Rice	W	36-17
Oct.	27	at Western Kentucky	W	38-17
Nov.	3	Florida Atlantic	L	14-49
Nov.	10	at UTSA	W	45-7
Nov.	17	at Charlotte	W	42-35
Nov.	24	Marshall	L	25-28
Dec.	21	vs. Toledo #	W	35-32

#Bahamas Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Lexington Joseph, RB, Miami, FL
2. Brian Dillard, CB, Ocala, FL
3. Kendré Gant, WR, Port Saint Joe, FL
4. Stone Norton, QB, Nashville, TN
5. Sione Finau, OG, Keller, TX
6. Ni'Kendrick Carter, ATH, Many, LA
7. Joseph Hocker, TE, Cincinnati, OH
8. Logan Gunderson, OG, Jacksonville, FL*
9. Nate Jefferson, WR, Longwood, FL
10. Kris Mitchell, WR, Jacksonville, FL

*junior college transfer

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	C-USA	NATIONAL
Scoring	34.6 ppg	1	26
Rushing	175.8 ypg	3	56
Passing	245.7 ypg	6	54
Total	421.5 ypg	4	47
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**C-USA**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	25.2 ppg	6	46
Rushing	192.2 ypg	12	92
Passing	194.1 ypg	4	30
Total	386.3 ypg	8	56
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**C-USA**	**NATIONAL**
+9	+0.69	1	16

STAT CORNER

8-2

In two years under Butch Davis, FIU is 8-2 in one-possession games. Can improving talent offset some regression to the mean?

OFFENSE FIU's offense will have plenty of playmakers with quarterback James Morgan, the team's top four running backs and four of its top five pass catchers all returning for coach Butch Davis.

The dynamic of the FIU offense was interesting last season. Normally, it is a run game that is consistent and a passing attack that is feast-or-famine. Last season, the Panthers experienced the opposite, with the run game lacking consistency and a passing game that saw Morgan finish with a 65 percent completion percentage based on success with short and intermediate throws.

As with any offense, however, the ball only moves when the offensive line is getting a push, and the Panthers' biggest losses from 2018 occurred along the front, where they must replace four players who combined for 107 career starts. The good news is that some of the starters have experience due to injury issues that forced them into action. D'Antne Demery and Dallas Connell must continue to grow and lead the offensive line to allow Morgan a chance to get the ball into the hands of FIU's multitude of talented playmakers.

The Panthers are excited about the potential of running back D'Vonte Price, who will be the primary ball carrier after backing up Napoleon Maxwell last season. Price averaged 6.2 yards on 90 carries in 2018.

DEFENSE FIU features one of the best secondaries in the Group of 5. That group kept the Panthers in a lot of games while the run defense struggled. Players such as Richard Dames and Stantley Thomas-Oliver III are among the standouts. Dames' ability as both a nickel back and safety adds versatility to the defense.

Aside from Dames, linebacker Sage Lewis is a prime defensive player, but he needs help at the second level. Noah Curtis is also a formidable pass-rush threat up front.

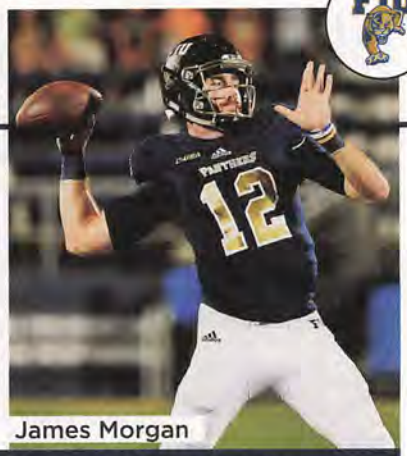
The question for FIU will be whether the run defense — which ranked 12th in the league last year — can force teams into second- and third-and-long situations, which helps utilize the team's strength.

SPECIALISTS FIU's special teams was strong in 2018, but the Panthers must replace punter Stone Wilson, who averaged 44.0 yards per kick last season. Expect Tommy Heatherly to take over for Wilson. Jose Borregales is back after hitting 14-of-18 field goals, including five kicks of 40-plus yards. Maurice Alexander and Austin Maloney are veteran return men, but Price is also an option.

FINAL ANALYSIS FIU's prospects for the 2019 season rest in the trenches: Consistency in the running game will come if the offensive line improves, making Morgan even more dangerous. On the flip side, if FIU's defensive front improves its run-stopping ability, the secondary can cause havoc.

FIU could start 9–0 if it survives road trips to Louisiana Tech and Middle Tennessee. However, the last three games of the year will be tricky — road trips to Florida Atlantic and Marshall sandwiched around a home date with Miami (Fla.). Still, FIU could emerge as one of the top Group of 5 programs if things break right.

Davis continues to work wonders in South Florida.



James Morgan

"The best-coached team in the league. Every unit, special teams, all of it. They have more discipline and awareness on the field than any other team."

— An opposing C-USA assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (7)				Returning Starters in Bold
WR	15	**Austin Maloney (Sr.)**	14	Darrius Scott (Sr.)
WR	9	Bryce Singleton (Jr.)	44	Cadarius Gaskin (So.)
WR	1	**Maurice Alexander (Sr.)**	16	Tony Gaiter IV (Sr.)
LT	77	**D'Antne Demery (Jr.)**	64	Willa Pierre (So.)
LG	79	Logan Gunderson (So.)	74	Shacquille Williams (Sr.)
C	60	**Dallas Connell (Sr.)**		Julius Pierce (Fr.)
RG	55	**Shane McGough (Jr.)**	62	Mershawn Miller (So.)
RT	58	Devontay Taylor (Jr.)	64	Willa Pierre (So.)
TE	88	**Sterling Palmer (So.)**	84	David O'Meara (So.)
QB	12	**James Morgan (Sr.)**	7	Kaylan Wiggins (So.)
RB	24	D'Vonte Price (Jr.)	2	Anthony Jones (Sr.)
DEFENSE (6)				
DE	90	**Noah Curtis (Jr.)**	94	Kevin Oliver (Jr.)
DT	93	Teair Tart (Sr.)	96	Josh Little (Sr.)
DT	98	Jordan Woods (Jr.)	96	Josh Little (Sr.
DE	92	Jason Mercier (So.)	94	**Kevin Oliver (Jr.)**
OLB	45	Rocky Jacques-Louis (So.)	37	Romelo Brooks (Jr.)
MLB	3	**Sage Lewis (Sr.)**	51	Dimitry Prophete (Jr.)
OLB	59	Jamal Gates (Jr.)	48	Josh Powell (Jr.)
CB	21	**Stantley Thomas-Oliver III (Sr.)**	35	Rishard Dames (Jr.)
CB	4	Isaiah Brown (Sr.)	27	Benny McCray (So.)
S	38	Richard Dames (Jr.)	10	**Olin Cushion III (Sr.)**
S	36	**Dorian Hall (So.)**	10	Olin Cushion III (Sr.)
SPECIAL TEAMS				
K	30	Jose Borregales (Jr.)	KR 15	Austin Maloney (Sr.)
P		Tommy Heatherly (Jr.)	PR 1	Maurice Alexander (Sr.)

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: James Morgan, 326-213-2,727-7, 26 TDs
Rushing: D'Vonte Price, 90 att., 560 yds., 5 TDs
Receiving: Maurice Alexander, 40 rec., 474 yds., 5 TDs
Tackles: Sage Lewis, 132
Sacks: Teair Tart, 4.0
Interceptions: Richard Dames, Dorian Hall, 3

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Butch Davis
Record at School: 17-9 (2 years)
Career Record: 80-52 (12 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Rich Skrosky
Defensive Coordinators: Jeff Kopp, Jerod Kruse
Miami, FL • Riccardo Silva Stadium (20,000)

FIU Athletics

Marshall **Thundering Herd**

National Forecast: **71** • C-USA East Prediction: **1** • Projected Record: **9-4, 6-2 C-USA**

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	VMI
Sept.	6	at Boise State
Sept.	14	Ohio
Sept.	28	Cincinnati
Oct.	5	at Middle Tennessee
Oct.	12	Old Dominion
Oct.	18	at Florida Atlantic
Oct.	26	Western Kentucky
Nov.	2	at Rice
Nov.	15	Louisiana Tech
Nov.	23	at Charlotte
Nov.	30	FIU

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 9-4, 6-2 C-USA

Sept.	1	at Miami (Ohio)	W	35-28
Sept.	8	Eastern Kentucky	W	32-16
Sept.	22	NC State	L	20-37
Sept.	29	at Western Kentucky	W	20-17
Oct.	5	Middle Tennessee	L	24-34
Oct.	13	at Old Dominion	W	42-20
Oct.	20	Florida Atlantic	W	31-7
Nov.	3	at Southern Miss	L	24-26
Nov.	10	Charlotte	W	30-13
Nov.	17	UTSA	W	23-0
Nov.	24	at FIU	W	28-25
Dec.	1	at Virginia Tech	L	20-41
Dec.	20	vs. South Florida #	W	38-20

#Gasparilla Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Dante Walker, DE, Riverdale, GA
2. Amir Richardson, WR, Morgantown, WV
3. Malik Tolbert, WR, Winter Park, FL
4. DeShawn Page, LB, Knoxville, TN
5. Josh Ball, OT, Fredericksburg, VA*
6. Knowledge McDaniel, RB, Bradenton, FL
7. Tworn Seals, DE, Ellenwood, GA
8. Rashawn Hunter, S, Cape Coral, FL
9. Ahmad Gilbert, DE, Aliquippa, PA
10. Jeremy Smith, RB, Savannah, GA

*junior college transfer

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	C-USA	NATIONAL
Scoring	28.2 ppg	6	74
Rushing	165.5 ypg	4	71
Passing	228.1 ypg	8	68
Total	393.6 ypg	6	73
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**C-USA**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	21.8 ppg	3	26
Rushing	104.2 ypg	2	8
Passing	234.5 ypg	8	73
Total	338.7 ypg	4	25
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**C-USA**	**NATIONAL**
0	0.00	8	69

STAT CORNER

6.3

Tilting the field: Marshall's field position margin was plus-6.3 yards per drive in 2018, sixth in FBS and tops in Conference USA.

OFFENSE The nucleus of Marshall's offense should be strong with much of the offensive line returning in front of a pair of talented running backs in Brenden Knox, who emerged late in the season as a starter, and Tyler King, who was explosive before injuries sidelined him midseason.

Quarterback Isaiah Green also returns after a successful rookie campaign that saw him land on the Conference USA All-Freshman Team. Green threw for 2,459 yards and 15 touchdowns with 10 interceptions in 10 games. The next step for Green: Play with more consistency.

That consistency will be key as Green loses his top target in wide receiver Tyre Brady, who led the team in receiving the last two seasons. Obi Obialo has proven to be a solid target over the past two years, but he will have to step up his game as he takes on the role as the No. 1 receiver. Tavin Richardson, a grad transfer from Virginia Tech, should help right away.

Look for Marshall to incorporate the tight end in the passing attack more as well, with a pair of solid targets in Armani Levias and Xavier Gaines back in the mix. They combined to catch 38 passes in 2018.

DEFENSE Marshall loses a lot of experience from the interior of its front seven, so a team strength last year — stopping the run — could be an issue.

New defensive coordinator Brad Lambert, the former head coach at Charlotte, brings a strong résumé to his new job; last year, the 49ers ranked third in Conference USA in both total defense and rushing defense. Still, it could be a rough transition as so many unproven players are taking prominent roles.

One key cog figures to be Ty Tyler, who could make the move from end to tackle to strengthen the interior while paving the way for talented rushers Darius Hodge and Koby Cumberlander to see more action. Hodge played well late last season.

The strength of the defense is the secondary, which returns plenty of experience, led by cornerback Chris Jackson, a four-year starter who has improved each season. The surprising loss of safety Malik Gant to the NFL Draft is somewhat mitigated by the return of Brandon Drayton, who has platooned with Gant and fellow returning safety Nazeeh Johnson the last two seasons. Those safeties will be asked to help in run support due to the inexperience up front.

SPECIALISTS Placekicker Justin Rohrwasser and punter Robert LeFevre are back, but consistency in the kicking game is still an issue. Wide receiver Willie Johnson will return kickoffs. King is likely to see action in the punt return game after limited experience in that area last season.

FINAL ANALYSIS Turnovers were a big issue for Marshall's offense in 2018 — the Herd committed 24, second most in the league — but the defense consistently bailed the team out of negative situations. Marshall will have no such luxury in 2019 with many veteran pieces gone from last year's defense.

The offense will have to shore up the turnover issues while identifying new targets in the passing attack, and the defense must have some players in the front seven grow up quickly.

The early portion of the schedule is tough, with nonconference games against Boise State, Ohio and Cincinnati, but if the Herd defense can grow up quickly, Marshall should be in the upper echelon of Conference USA's East Division again.

Isaiah Green

"They swing back and forth more than any other C-USA school. But when they're on, they've got P5 talent at a lot of places. This looks like a big year."

— An opposing C-USA assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (7) — Returning Starters in Bold

WR		Tavin Richardson (Sr.)	1	Willie Johnson (Jr.)
WR	7	**Obi Obialo (Sr.)**	88	Broc Thompson (Fr.)
SLOT	2	Artie Henry (Sr.)	5	Ty Terrell (Fr.)
LT	79	Josh Ball (Jr.)	68	Dalton Tucker (Fr.)
LG	50	**Will Ulmer (Jr.)**	62	Cain Madden (Jr.)
C	61	**Levi Brown (Sr.)**	78	Alex Salguero (Jr.)
RG	55	Alex Mollette (Jr.)	62	**Cain Madden (Jr.)**
RT	71	**Tarik Adams (Jr.)**	50	Will Ulmer (Jr.)
TE	15	**Armani Levias (Sr.)**	11	Xavier Gaines (Jr.)
QB	17	**Isaiah Green (So.)**	6	Alex Thomson (Sr.)
RB	20	Brenden Knox (So.)	3	Tyler King (Jr.)

DEFENSE (6)

DE	44	Darius Hodge (So.)	98	Koby Cumberlander (So.)
DT	1	**Ty Tyler (Sr.)**	90	TJ Johnson (Jr.)
DT	94	Channing Hames (Sr.)	92	Rodney Croom (So.)
DE	6	**Marquis Couch (Sr.)**	33	Sam Burton (Fr.)
LB	31	**Omari Cobb (Sr.)**	25	J'Coryan Anderson (Fr.)
LB	2	Jaquan Yulee (Jr.)	46	Breon Heyward (Jr.)
CB	3	**Chris Jackson (Sr.)**	34	Steven Gilmore (So.)
CB	5	**Kereon Merrell (Sr.)**	7	Jaylon McClain-Sapp (Jr.)
NB	4	Tavante Beckett (Jr.)	22	Jestin Morrow (Jr.)
FS	13	**Nazeeh Johnson (Jr.)**	12	Markeis Colvin (Fr.)
SS	8	Brandon Drayton (Jr.)	41	Kenard King (So.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	16	Justin Rohrwasser (Sr.)	KR	1	Willie Johnson (Jr.)
P	43	Robert LeFevre (Jr.)	PR	3	Tyler King (Jr.)

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Isaiah Green, 330-187-2,459-10, 15 TDs
Rushing: Tyler King, 108 att., 655 yds., 4 TDs
Receiving: Obi Obialo, 42 rec., 505 yds., 4 TDs
Tackles: Chris Jackson, 61
Sacks: Ty Tyler, 9.0
Interceptions: 6 players tied with 1

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Doc Holliday
Record at School: 70-46 (9 years)
Career Record: 70-46 (9 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Tim Cramsey
Defensive Coordinators: Brad Lambert, J.C. Price
Huntington, WV • Joan C. Edwards Stadium (38,016)

Marshall Athletics

MTSU **Blue Raiders**

National Forecast: **97** • C-USA East Prediction: **4** • Projected Record: **6-6, 5-3 C-USA**

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	at Michigan
Sept.	7	Tennessee State
Sept.	14	Duke
Sept.	28	at Iowa
Oct.	5	Marshall
Oct.	12	at Florida Atlantic
Oct.	19	at North Texas
Oct.	26	FIU
Nov.	2	at Charlotte
Nov.	16	Rice
Nov.	23	Old Dominion
Nov.	30	at Western Kentucky

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 8-6, 7-1 C-USA

Sept.	1	at Vanderbilt	L	7-35
Sept.	8	Tennessee-Martin	W	61-37
Sept.	15	at Georgia	L	7-49
Sept.	29	Florida Atlantic	W	25-24
Oct.	5	at Marshall	W	34-24
Oct.	13	at FIU	L	21-24
Oct.	20	Charlotte	W	21-13
Oct.	27	at Old Dominion	W	51-17
Nov.	2	Western Kentucky	W	29-10
Nov.	10	at UTEP	W	48-32
Nov.	17	at Kentucky	L	23-34
Nov.	24	UAB	W	27-3
Dec.	1	UAB #	L	25-27
Dec.	15	vs. App. State %	L	13-45

#C-USA Championship %New Orleans Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Marcus Lafrance, CB, N. Lauderdale, FL
2. Darius Williams, DE, Hemingway, SC
3. Quincy Riley, CB, Columbia, SC
4. Zaylin Wood, DE, Bowdon, GA
5. Randall Johnson, QB, Los Angeles, CA*
6. Dorian Hinton, OG, Naples, FL
7. Raquon Hartley, ATH, Saluda, SC
8. Jarrin Pierce, WR, Mission Hills, CA*
9. Darius McClendon, DB, Boynton Beach, FL
10. Adam Derry, C, Ft. Mitchell, KY

*junior college transfer

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	C-USA	NATIONAL
Scoring	28.0 ppg	7	77
Rushing	132.6 ypg	9	108
Passing	260.7 ypg	3	34
Total	393.4 ypg	7	74
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**C-USA**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	26.7 ppg	8	62
Rushing	164.6 ypg	8	66
Passing	213.2 ypg	6	52
Total	377.9 ypg	7	50
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**C-USA**	**NATIONAL**
+5	+0.36	3	39

STAT CORNER

6, 7, 8

MTSU has won either six, seven or eight games in eight of nine seasons in the 2010s. Consistency is a good thing, right?

OFFENSE Middle Tennessee must replace Brent Stockstill, last year's Conference USA MVP and the program's all-time leading passer with 12,483 yards. Sophomore Asher O'Hara, his possible replacement, has only 114 passing yards in his abbreviated career. And while Randall Johnson racked up 42 passing TDs and 27 rushing TDs in two junior college seasons, he has never taken a snap in a Division I game. Neither option is projected to fully fill Stockstill's shoes, but one of them must come close enough in order to utilize a talented group of skill players.

Ty Lee should pass former teammate Richie James to break MTSU's career records in receptions, yards and TD catches by season's end. If CJ Windham and Jocquez Bruce can remain healthy and part-time running back Brad Anderson returns to slot receiver, the new quarterback should have ample targets to give the passing game a chance.

Running back Chaton Mobley was good as a freshman (660 rushing yards, four TDs) and should be better as a sophomore. Senior Terelle West is a steady sidekick. And blazing-fast all-purpose performer Zack Dobson is begging to bust out after a freshman season that hinted at his big-play ability.

A big question is the offensive line, which struggled the past two seasons. It especially needs to buckle down since O'Hara and Johnson lack Stockstill's quick trigger, which sometimes minimized sacks.

DEFENSE Defensive coordinator Scott Shafer returns many of the pieces to his blitz packages that helped MTSU force the most turnovers in C-USA last season. Unfortunately, the same high-risk, high-reward unit that intercepted 16 passes also ranked last in third down defense. Outside linebackers Khalil Brooks and DQ Thomas are back after each recording 14.5 tackles for a loss, so the Blue Raiders will still have some bite. But the defensive line lacks a feared pass rusher and proven depth, and there are questions whether the linebacking corps can compensate.

In the secondary, two NFL-caliber safeties are joined by inexperienced cornerbacks. Reed Blankenship is a ball-hawking, all-conference free safety who led the team with 107 tackles last season. Strong safety Jovante Moffatt led the team with 101 tackles in 2017 before missing nine games last season due to a shoulder injury. Sophomore Gregory Grate Jr. and redshirt freshman Teldrick Ross are the frontrunners for the cornerback spots, but more depth must develop there.

SPECIALISTS Crews Holt returns as an accurate kicker with limited range. Last season, he made 17-of-17 field goals inside 40 yards but only 1-of-7 beyond that. Matthew Stephenson steps into the vacancy at punter. Lee will return kicks and punts.

FINAL ANALYSIS Coach Rick Stockstill's tenure has produced 10 bowl-eligible teams in 13 seasons, but no conference titles. Look for both trends to continue. The Blue Raiders got as close as ever in Brent Stockstill's senior year, losing a heartbreaker to UAB in the C-USA title game. It's hard to see this team outplaying that team, but it should get to a bowl game again. Much of MTSU's success depends on whether it can find an answer at quarterback and if that new quarterback can keep his confidence after intimidating early trips to Michigan and Iowa.

Reed Blankenship

"The loss of (Brent) Stockstill at QB is huge. It's gonna be a hard year. They cycled out a ton from graduation, and they're not naturally talented."

— An opposing C-USA assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (5)				Returning Starters in Bold
WR	8	**Ty Lee (Sr.)**	24	Zack Dobson (So.)
WR	11	Brad Anderson (Jr.)	84	Zeke Cobb (So.)
WR	5	Jocquez Bruce (Sr.)	83	Jimmy Marshall (Jr.)
WR	81	**CJ Windham (Jr.)**	9	Isiah Upton (Sr.)
LT	66	Will Gilchrist (Jr.)	76	D.J. Delfendahl (So.)
LG	71	Angelo Owens (Sr.)	63	Eric Golston (Sr.)
C	72	**Josh Fannin (Sr.)**	53	Matt Martin (Jr.)
RG	65	Marcus Greer (Fr.)	62	Jack Mitchell (Sr.)
RT	77	**Amir Luckett (Sr.)**	68	Luke Harris (Jr.)
QB	10	Asher O'Hara (So.)		Randall Johnson (Jr.)
RB	44	**Chaton Mobley (So.)**	1	Terelle West (Sr.)
DEFENSE (6)				
DE	94	Tyshun Render (Sr.)	49	Jorden Starling (Fr.)
DT	93	**Malik Manciel (Sr.)**	99	Jordan Branch (Fr.)
DT	91	Jordan Ferguson (Jr.)	88	Ja'Kerrius Wyatt (So.)
DE	95	**Trae Philpots (Sr.)**	56	JeQuaries Martin (Jr.)
SLB	20	**DQ Thomas (Jr.)**	32	Chris Melton (Sr.)
MLB	42	Cody Smith (So.)	40	Avery Jones (Sr.)
WLB	6	**Khalil Brooks (Sr.)**	26	Wayne Parks (So.)
CB	19	Teldrick Ross (Fr.)	25	Desmond Anderson (Sr.)
CB	3	Gregory Grate Jr. (So.)	15	Raheme Fuller (So.)
SS	7	**Jovante Moffatt (Sr.)**	38	Kendricks Gladney (Sr.)
FS	12	**Reed Blankenship (Jr.)**	17	Kylan Stribling (Jr.)
SPECIAL TEAMS				
K	18	Crews Holt (Jr.)	KR	8 Ty Lee (Sr.)
P	90	Matthew Stephenson (Jr.)	PR	8 Ty Lee (Sr.)

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Asher O'Hara, 20-9-114-1, 0 TDs
Rushing: Chaton Mobley, 123 att., 660 yds., 4 TDs
Receiving: Ty Lee, 71 rec., 883 yds., 7 TDs
Tackles: Reed Blankenship, 107
Sacks: DQ Thomas, 8.0
Interceptions: Reed Blankenship, 4

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Rick Stockstill
Record at School: 87-78 (13 years)
Career Record: 87-78 (13 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Tony Franklin
Defensive Coordinator: Scott Shafer
Murfreesboro, TN • Floyd Stadium (30,788)

Middle Tennessee Athletics

Old Dominion **Monarchs**

National Forecast: **117** • C-USA East Prediction: **7** • Projected Record: **3-9, 2-6 C-USA**

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	Norfolk State
Sept.	7	at Virginia Tech
Sept.	21	at Virginia
Sept.	28	East Carolina
Oct.	5	Western Kentucky
Oct.	12	at Marshall
Oct.	19	at UAB
Oct.	26	Florida Atlantic
Nov.	2	at FIU
Nov.	9	UTSA
Nov.	23	at Middle Tennessee
Nov.	30	Charlotte

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 4-8, 2-6 C-USA

Sept.	1	at Liberty	L	10-52
Sept.	8	FIU	L	20-28
Sept.	13	at Charlotte	L	25-28
Sept.	22	Virginia Tech	W	49-35
Sept.	29	at East Carolina	L	35-37
Oct.	6	at Florida Atlantic	L	33-52
Oct.	13	Marshall	L	20-42
Oct.	20	at Western Kentucky	W	37-34
Oct.	27	Middle Tennessee	L	17-51
Nov.	10	North Texas	W	34-31
Nov.	17	VMI	W	77-14
Nov.	24	at Rice	L	13-27

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Hayden Wolff, QB, Venice, FL
2. Jorell Baum, DE, Elizabeth City, NC
3. Messiah deWeaver, QB, Dayton, OH*
4. Billy Lucas, RB, Erie, PA
5. Ryan Henry, LB, Goulds, FL*
6. Tyree Bibby, DE, Hialeah, FL*
7. Braxton Collins, WR, Greer, SC
8. Elonte Jones, DE, Lynchburg, VA
9. Kaleb Ford-Dement, CB, Whitehouse, TX*
10. Khadere Kounta, OL, Bethesda, MD

*junior college transfer

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	C-USA	NATIONAL
Scoring	30.8 ppg	4	49
Rushing	130.8 ypg	10	110
Passing	297.0 ypg	2	15
Total	427.8 ypg	3	40
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**C-USA**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	35.9 ppg	13	111
Rushing	216.4 ypg	14	109
Passing	255.0 ypg	12	102
Total	471.4 ypg	14	118
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**C-USA**	**NATIONAL**
-6	-0.50	12	108

STAT CORNER

10.1

ODU's scoring average improved by 10.1 points per game in 2018, the largest jump in C-USA. Now about the defense...

OFFENSE At first glance, Old Dominion had a successful season on the offensive side of the ball last year, averaging 30.8 points and 427.8 yards per game. Hidden in those numbers, though, were some frustrating realities.

The most glaring was a sputtering running game. Longtime Virginia Tech assistant Bryan Stinespring takes over as running game coordinator, working with veteran offensive coordinator Brian Scott to retool the rushing attack. Fifth-year senior Kesean Strong, last season's leading rusher, anchors a deep group of backs that includes returning contributors Matt Geiger and Brandon Sinclair.

"We've got a mix of speed and power," Monarchs coach Bobby Wilder says.

Up front, two-year starter Isaac Weaver will move from tackle to guard, where he'll join fellow veteran Tony Barnett, providing a rare dose of experience on an untested offensive line.

The Monarchs lost players who registered 92 percent of last season's catches. Sophomore tight end Donta Anthony Jr. and senior receiver Darrell Brown are the most experienced targets, and ODU added two grad transfers from Virginia Tech — tight end Chris Cunningham and wideout Eric Kumah (42 receptions last season).

Who will get them the ball is an open question, as sophomore Steven Williams, an all-conference freshman in 2017, headlines a congested QB picture.

DEFENSE David Blackwell, who found success helming defenses at East Carolina, Jacksonville State and Fordham, will take the reins as defensive coordinator, promising plenty of personnel changes as the Monarchs get settled in his aggressive 4-2-5 scheme.

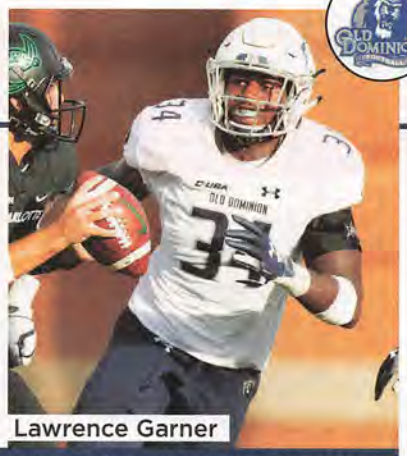
Nose tackle Jeremy Meiser started 10 games last season and will be an anchor up front. Converted tight end Keion White and converted linebacker Derek Wilder will be in the mix at defensive end alongside Marcus Haynes and junior college transfer Elijah Golston. Juwan Ross and junior college transfer Blake Hehl will likely make an impact at tackle.

Junior Lawrence Garner, who led the league with 11.1 tackles per game, is back at linebacker alongside Jordan Young, who racked up 75 tackles last season. Fellow contributors Terez Dickerson and Demetrius Stitmon will bolster a deep group of linebackers.

Corners Joe Joe Headen and Lance Boykin will likely reprise their starting roles with help from a deep crop of reserves. The options are plentiful at safety, where Justinn Richardson and Geronda Hall bring experience, and the addition of some junior college transfers will create competition.

SPECIALISTS The Monarchs have remarkable stability among their specialists as field goal kicker Nick Rice, kickoff specialist Brad Davis, long snapper B.R. Hatcher, punter Bailey Cate and punt returner Darrell Brown all return.

FINAL ANALYSIS Now heading into his 11th season at the helm of the program he helped relaunch, Wilder felt the need to shake things up after back-to-back losing seasons. The additions of Blackwell and Stinespring headline the staff changes, while an influx of junior college transfers creates intriguing position battles. A nonconference schedule that features East Carolina, Virginia and Virginia Tech — which fell to the Monarchs in last season's signature win — will provide stiff tests for the new wrinkles.



Lawrence Garner

"There's a culture issue there, and they haven't been able to deal with their early success. A lot of roster turnover here, too. This could be a long season."

— An opposing C-USA assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

Returning Starters in Bold

OFFENSE (2)				
WR	10	Darrell Brown (Sr.)	83	Jake Herslow (Jr.)
WR	2	Hasaan Patterson (Sr.)	86	Darius Savedge (Fr.)
WR		Eric Kumah (Sr.)	19	Cornell Hendrick Jr. (Fr.)
LT	76	Jack Miller (So.)	62	Nathan Thacker (So.)
LG	**74**	**Tony Barnett (Sr.)**	64	Nick Saldiveri (Fr.)
C	75	Diego Cervantes (So.)	65	Cameron Muller (So.)
RG	**71**	**Isaac Weaver (Jr.)**	61	Andrew Lawson (Jr.)
RT	70	Jack Hassard (Fr.)	67	Elijah Rivers (So.)
TE		Chris Cunningham (Sr.)	84	Donta Anthony Jr. (So.)
QB	5	Steven Williams (So.)	7	Messiah deWeaver (Jr.)
RB	1	Kesean Strong (Sr.)	16	Brandon Sinclair (Jr.)
DEFENSE (4)				
DE	93	Elijah Golston (So.)	6	Keion White (So.)
DT	52	Juwan Ross (Jr.)	90	Blake Hehl (So.)
DT	**54**	**Jeremy Meiser (Jr.)**	57	Mufu Taiwo (Sr.)
DE	97	Marcus Haynes (So.)	42	Derek Wilder (Sr.)
LB	**34**	**Lawrence Garner (Jr.)**	45	Demetrius Stitmon (Jr.)
LB	**3**	**Jordan Young (Jr.)**	13	Terez Dickerson (Sr.)
CB	1	Lance Boykin (So.)	5	Will Brocchini (Jr.)
CB	**24**	**Joe Joe Headen (Jr.)**	22	Kaleb Ford-Dement (So.)
NB	23	Geronda Hall (So.)	38	Parrish Gordon (Jr.)
FS	14	Justinn Richardson (So.)	7	Harrell Blackmon (Jr.)
SS	10	Damion Charity (Fr.)	17	R'Tarriun Johnson (Jr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	98	Nick Rice (Jr.)	KR	1	Kesean Strong (Sr.)
P	96	Bailey Cate (Sr.)	PR	10	Darrell Brown (Sr.)

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Steven Williams, 81-41-507-2, 2 TDs
Rushing: Kesean Strong, 106 att., 499 yds., 9 TDs
Receiving: Kesean Strong, 21 rec., 177 yds., 2 TDs
Tackles: Lawrence Garner, 100
Sacks: Marcus Haynes, 2.0
Interceptions: Geronda Hall, 2

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Bobby Wilder
Record at School: 76-45 (10 years)
Career Record: 76-45 (10 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Brian Scott
Defensive Coordinators: David Blackwell, Gary Brown
Norfolk, VA • Foreman Field (20,118)

Old Dominion Athletics

WKU Hilltoppers

National Forecast: **111** • C-USA East Prediction: **5** • Projected Record: **4-8, 3-5 C-USA**

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	Central Arkansas
Sept.	7	at FIU
Sept.	14	vs. Louisville #
Sept.	28	UAB
Oct.	5	at Old Dominion
Oct.	12	Army
Oct.	19	Charlotte
Oct.	26	at Marshall
Nov.	2	Florida Atlantic
Nov.	9	at Arkansas
Nov.	23	at Southern Miss
Nov.	30	Middle Tennessee

#Nashville, TN

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 3-9, 2-6 C-USA

Aug.	31	at Wisconsin	L	3-34
Sept.	8	Maine	L	28-31
Sept.	15	at Louisville	L	17-20
Sept.	22	at Ball State	W	28-20
Sept.	29	Marshall	L	17-20
Oct.	13	at Charlotte	L	14-40
Oct.	20	Old Dominion	L	34-37
Oct.	27	FIU	L	17-38
Nov.	2	at Middle Tenn.	L	10-29
Nov.	10	at Florida Atlantic	L	15-34
Nov.	17	UTEP	W	40-16
Nov.	24	at Louisiana Tech	W	30-15

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Manny Allen, WR, Moreno Valley, CA
2. Tyler Smith, WR, Ellenwood, GA
3. Clayton Bush, WR, Bowling Green, KY
4. Celestin Haba, DL, Columbia, SC*
5. Jack Randolph, OG, Franklin, KY
6. Stephone Atkinson, DE, Lake Minneola, FL
7. Dalvin Smith, WR, Glasgow, KY
8. Ricky Barber, DT, Louisville, KY
9. Daylen Powell, OT, Summerville, SC
10. Cory Munson, PK, Warner Robins, GA

*junior college transfer

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	C-USA	NATIONAL
Scoring	21.1 ppg	11	118
Rushing	136.8 ypg	8	104
Passing	226.8 ypg	9	70
Total	363.7 ypg	10	102
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**C-USA**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	27.8 ppg	9	75
Rushing	172.8 ypg	10	77
Passing	248.8 ypg	10	97
Total	421.6 ypg	10	82
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**C-USA**	**NATIONAL**
+2	+0.17	5	52

STAT CORNER

253

WKU scored only 253 total points in 12 games last fall. The Hilltoppers scored 263 in their final five games of the 2016 season.

OFFENSE WKU's offense lit up scoreboards under Jeff Brohm, then fell flat under Mike Sanford. Now new coach Tyson Helton, a former Brohm staffer, is tasked with rebooting the Hilltoppers' attack after a 3–9 season.

Helton was WKU's offensive coordinator and quarterbacks coach in 2014 and '15. Over those two seasons, the Hilltoppers averaged 44 points and 530 yards per game. They went 20–7, won two bowl games and claimed the 2015 Conference USA title. Helton left to spend two years at USC, working for brother Clay, before serving in 2018 as Tennessee's offensive coordinator. Helton's promise to WKU fans since his hire has been to re-energize a Hilltopper offense that averaged 21.1 points per game (118th nationally) in 2018. He and coordinator Bryan Ellis start that effort with a unit that graduated only three players off last year's squad.

Quarterback Steven Duncan established himself as WKU's starter down the stretch in 2018. Duncan's nine touchdowns were most among Hilltopper QBs last season, but so were his seven interceptions. Helton signed Arkansas graduate transfer Ty Storey in the spring to push Duncan.

The Hilltoppers return their leading rusher, Joshua Samuel (641 yards), and their leading receiver, Lucky Jackson (563 yards). Jacquez Sloan, who averaged a team-best 16 yards per catch, rejoins the group after a knee injury cost him WKU's final three games. The Hilltoppers feature an offensive line that brings back all its 2018 contributors, including second-team All-C-USA pick Miles Pate at right tackle.

DEFENSE One of Helton's first acts as WKU's coach was to retain defensive coordinator Clayton White, along with most of his staff. White's 4-2-5 defense ranked 11th last year of 14 C-USA teams in yards per play allowed (6.02) during league games.

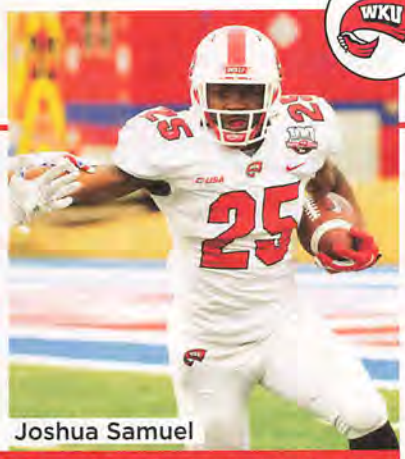
White's defensive line is anchored by ends DeAngelo Malone (6.0 sacks in 2018) and Juwuan Jones (5.0), a Freshman All-American. Those two led the Hilltoppers' pass-rushing improvement from 0.92 sacks per game in 2017 to 2.33 last fall.

WKU must replace leading tackler Ben Holt. The linebacker left this offseason as a graduate transfer to Purdue, where his father Nick is defensive coordinator. Eli Brown posted 25 tackles as a reserve linebacker last season after transferring from Kentucky. He's poised to step into a starting role, although he'll spend much of the offseason rehabbing a foot injury suffered during spring practice. Former safety Kyle Bailey has moved to linebacker and is likely to start.

Nickel back Ta'Corian Darden and safety Devon Key are the Hilltoppers' leading returning tacklers and pass defenders. The two DBs tallied 71 stops and three interceptions apiece in 2018.

SPECIALISTS Alex Rinella made 7-of-10 field goal attempts in 2018, missing only once from inside 50. New punter John Haggerty is a 6'5" Australian who'll try his hand at college football.

FINAL ANALYSIS While Sanford's on-field product flopped, his recruiting efforts brought some talented players to WKU. Now Helton will take those pieces, mix in an offensive system the Hilltoppers used to thrive earlier in the decade and hope to regain a foothold in Conference USA. Attaining bowl eligibility would mark a successful first season for WKU's new coach.



Joshua Samuel

"All of a sudden this is a hard job with expectations, but if Tyson (Helton) can figure out a quick fix for the offense, they could compete next year."

— An opposing C-USA assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (9)				Returning Starters in Bold
WR	11	**Lucky Jackson (Sr.)**	9	Xavier Lane (Jr.)
WR	16	**Quin Jernighan (Sr.)**	7	Jahcour Pearson (Jr.)
WR	2	Jacquez Sloan (Jr.)	5	Manny Allen (Fr.)
LT	68	**Parker Howell (Sr.)**	70	Cole Spencer (So.)
LG	74	**Tyler Witt (Jr.)**	71	Garrett Nickelson (So.)
C	67	**Seth Joest (Jr.)**	75	Gunner Britton (Fr.)
RG	61	**Jordan Meredith (Jr.)**	76	Preston Mixon (So.)
RT	63	**Miles Pate (Sr.)**	77	Mason Brooks (So.)
TE	42	**Kyle Fourtenbary (Jr.)**	48	Steven Witchoskey (Jr.)
QB	10	Steven Duncan (Jr.)	4	Ty Storey (Sr.)
RB	25	**Joshua Samuel (So.)**	21	Jakairi Moses (So.)
DEFENSE (6)				
DE	10	**DeAngelo Malone (Jr.)**	43	Carson Jordan (Sr.)
DT	90	**Jaylon George (Sr.)**	53	Jeremy Darvin (Jr.)
DT	99	Jalen Madden (Jr.)	98	Marcus Bragg (Jr.)
DE	34	**Juwuan Jones (So.)**	58	DeVon Quincy (Jr.)
LB	32	Eli Brown (Sr.)	30	Clay Davis (Jr.)
LB	36	Kyle Bailey (Jr.)	52	Damon Lowe (Jr.)
NB	15	**Ta'Corian Darden (Sr.)**	12	Gaej Walker (Jr.)
CB	24	**Roger Cray (Jr.)**	7	Trae Meadows (Jr.)
CB	26	Dionté Ruffin (Jr.)	29	Beanie Bishop (Fr.)
S	2	**Devon Key (Jr.)**	37	A.J. Brathwaite Jr. (Fr.)
S	31	Antwon Kincade (Jr.)	17	Canon Jackson (Sr.)
SPECIAL TEAMS				
K	39	Alex Rinella (Sr.)	KR 14	Garland LaFrance (So.)
P	47	John Haggerty (Jr.)	PR 24	Roger Cray (Jr.)

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Steven Duncan, 187-108-1,071-7, 9 TDs
Rushing: Joshua Samuel, 120 att., 641 yds., 1 TD
Receiving: Lucky Jackson, 51 rec., 563 yds., 4 TDs
Tackles: Ta'Corian Darden, Devon Key, 71
Sacks: DeAngelo Malone, 6.0
Interceptions: Ta'Corian Darden, Devon Key, 3

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Tyson Helton
Record at School: First Season
Career Record: First Season
Offensive Coordinator: Bryan Ellis
Defensive Coordinator: Clayton White
Bowling Green, KY • L.T. Smith Stadium (22,113)

Western Kentucky Athletics

Louisiana Tech **Bulldogs**

National Forecast: **89** • C-USA West Prediction: **4** • Projected Record: **7-5, 4-4 C-USA**

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	at Texas
Sept.	7	Grambling
Sept.	14	at Bowling Green
Sept.	20	FIU
Sept.	28	at Rice
Oct.	12	Massachusetts
Oct.	19	Southern Miss
Oct.	26	at UTEP
Nov.	9	North Texas
Nov.	15	at Marshall
Nov.	23	at UAB
Nov.	30	UTSA

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 8-5, 5-3 C-USA

Sept.	1	at South Alabama	W	30-26
Sept.	8	Southern	W	54-17
Sept.	22	at LSU	L	21-38
Sept.	29	at North Texas	W	29-27
Oct.	6	UAB	L	7-28
Oct.	13	at UTSA	W	31-3
Oct.	20	UTEP	W	31-24
Oct.	26	at Florida Atlantic	W	21-13
Nov.	3	at Mississippi State	L	3-45
Nov.	10	Rice	W	28-13
Nov.	17	at Southern Miss	L	20-21
Nov.	24	Western Kentucky	L	15-30
Dec.	22	vs. Hawaii #	W	31-14

#Hawaii Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Charvis Thornton, CB, Baton Rouge, LA
2. Deqaun Watts, ATH, Atlanta, GA
3. Mykol Clark, DE, Fort Worth, TX
4. Deshon Hall, DT, Gonzales, LA
5. Allen Walker, LB, Alpharetta, GA
6. Khiry Morrison, S, Saint Francisville, LA
7. Kyle Maxwell, WR, Amite City, LA
8. Christian Archangel, S, Lafayette, LA
9. Maki Carabin, LB, San Antonio, TX
10. Jakson Thomson, QB, Dallas, TX

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	C-USA	NATIONAL
Scoring	24.7 ppg	9	97
Rushing	129.6 ypg	11	113
Passing	249.7 ypg	5	45
Total	379.3 ypg	8	87
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**C-USA**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	23.0 ppg	4	39
Rushing	149.7 ypg	6	50
Passing	191.6 ypg	3	28
Total	341.3 ypg	5	27
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**C-USA**	**NATIONAL**
+3	+0.23	4	46

STAT CORNER

7.7

Third-and-long: The Bulldogs' defense improved from forcing an average of 6.1 yards to go on third down (127th) to 7.7 (21st).

OFFENSE Senior QB J'Mar Smith is entrenched entering his third and final season as the full-time starter, but Year 2 didn't yield quite the growth the Bulldogs had hoped. Smith's overall efficiency rating last year (121.2) was a slight step down from 2017 and trended in the wrong direction as the season went on: Nine of his 15 touchdown passes came in the first four games. Tech finished just 5–4 from that point on, failing to top 20 points in any of the four losses.

On the glass-half-full side of the ledger, Smith pulled out of his November slump to deliver arguably his best performance of the season in the bowl game, a 31–14 win over Hawaii. He'll also have the luxury of throwing to 2018's breakout star, junior Adrian Hardy, who led Conference USA in both catches (75) and yards (1,145). The rest of the surrounding cast is a work in progress. The ground game struggled with injuries and inconsistency, snapping a streak of four consecutive seasons with a 1,000-yard rusher.

Up front, the interior is set with vets Ethan Reed, Kody Russey and Drew Kirkpatrick. Both tackle spots are up for grabs and likely won't be settled until coaches get a good look at massive junior college transfers Antawn Lewis and Carter Habich in camp.

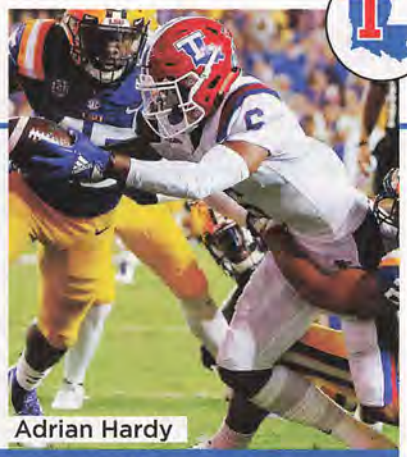
DEFENSE No outgoing player in C-USA left bigger shoes to fill than Jaylon Ferguson, a three-time all-conference pick who set the FBS record for career sacks. In fact, the entire line is in flux: All four starters will be new, including junior end Willie Baker, who'll be counted on to generate most of the heat on opposing QBs after finishing second on the team with 11.5 tackles for a loss off the bench. Inside, new defensive coordinator Bob Diaco brought in one of his former recruits at UConn, Kevin Murphy, as a graduate transfer to help with a critical lack of depth behind seniors Ka'Derrion Mason and Courtney Wallace.

The good news: Given any semblance of a pass rush, the back end will be just fine. More than fine, actually — the secondary projects as the strength of the team and arguably the best in the league. Cornerbacks Amik Robertson and L'Jarius Sneed started every regular-season game in 2018, with Robertson emerging as a potential next-level talent; his nine interceptions over the past two years are more than any other returning player in the nation.

SPECIALISTS Senior Bailey Hale held off Brady Farlow for placekicking duties in 2018 despite struggling from long range, missing on 5-of-8 attempts from 40 yards and beyond. Farlow, for his part, will likely take over as the full-time punter after sharing the job the past two years.

FINAL ANALYSIS Skip Holtz has been remarkably consistent, turning in winning records in 10 of the past 14 seasons at three different schools. But he's still waiting on his first really big year, and after six years in Ruston, the thrill of coming in above .500 is waning. The Bulldogs boast C-USA's second-best winning percentage since 2014 but have yet to claim a conference title.

On paper, this may not be the most likely team to end that streak. Again, though, the schedule is forgiving: After the opener at Texas, Tech will likely be favored in at least six of its next seven before a crucial-yet-manageable November stretch against North Texas, Marshall and UAB. With no obvious front-runner in the West Division, the opportunity is there for the taking.



Adrian Hardy

"Always a talented roster, always competitive with some size and speed. I think what's held them back is the assistant coaching turnover."

— An opposing C-USA assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (5)				Returning Starters in Bold
WR	**6**	**Adrian Hardy (Jr.)**	80	Griffin Hebert (So.)
WR	**4**	**Alfred Smith (Jr.)**	87	George Scott Jr. (So.)
WR	13	Isaiah Graham (Jr.)	89	Tahj Magee (Fr.)
WR	84	Javonte Woodard (Sr.)	81	Cee Jay Powell (Jr.)
LT	57	DeVante Lovett (Sr.)	72	Christian Henderson (Fr.)
LG	55	Drew Kirkpatrick (Sr.)		Antawn Lewis (Jr.)
C	**65**	**Kody Russey (Jr.)**	62	Abraham Delfin (So.)
RG	**61**	**Ethan Reed (Sr.)**	64	Joshua Mote (So.)
RT	77	Gewhite Stallworth (Sr.)	73	Willie Allen (Jr.)
QB	**8**	**J'Mar Smith (Sr.)**	10	Westin Elliott (Jr.)
RB	23	Jaqwis Dancy (Sr.)	22	Israel Tucker (Jr.)
DEFENSE (5)				
DE	85	Willie Baker (Jr.)	91	Steven Shaw (Fr.)
DT	96	Ka'Derrion Mason (Sr.)		Kevin Murphy (Sr.)
DT	90	Courtney Wallace (Sr.)	52	D.J. Jackson (Fr.)
DE	97	Milton Williams (Jr.)	98	Tristan Allen (So.)
LB	**35**	**Collin Scott (Sr.)**	3	Trey Baldwin (Jr.)
LB	2	Connor Taylor (Sr.)	8	Brandon Floyd (Jr.)
CB	**21**	**Amik Robertson (Jr.)**	5	Michael Sam (Sr.)
CB	**24**	**L'Jarius Sneed (Sr.)**	18	Zach Hannibal (Jr.)
S	37	Ephraim Kitchen (Sr.)	26	Jacorion Andrews (So.)
S	**28**	**Darryl Lewis (Sr.)**	7	Jaiden Cole (So.)
S	**10**	**James Jackson (Sr.)**	25	Bee Jay Williamson (Fr.)
SPECIAL TEAMS				
K	34	Bailey Hale (Sr.)	**KR** 14	Praise Okorie (Jr.)
P	29	Brady Farlow (Sr.)	**PR** 19	Smoke Harris (Fr.)

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: J'Mar Smith, 461-264-3,160-10, 15 TDs
Rushing: Jaqwis Dancy, 124 att., 667 yds., 9 TDs
Receiving: Adrian Hardy, 75 rec., 1,145 yds., 6 TDs
Tackles: Collin Scott, 87
Sacks: Willie Baker, 7.0
Interceptions: Amik Robertson, 4

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Skip Holtz
Record at School: 46-33 (6 years)
Career Record: 134-104 (19 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Todd Fitch
Defensive Coordinator: Bob Diaco
Ruston, LA • Joe Aillet Stadium (28,019)

Louisiana Tech Athletics

North Texas **Mean Green**

National Forecast: **73** • C-USA West Prediction: **1** • Projected Record: **8-5, 7-1 C-USA**

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	Abilene Christian
Sept.	7	at SMU
Sept.	14	at California
Sept.	21	UTSA
Sept.	28	Houston
Oct.	12	at Southern Miss
Oct.	19	Middle Tennessee
Oct.	26	at Charlotte
Nov.	2	UTEP
Nov.	9	at Louisiana Tech
Nov.	23	at Rice
Nov.	30	UAB

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 9-4, 5-3 C-USA

Sept.	1	SMU	W	46-23
Sept.	8	Incarnate Word	W	58-16
Sept.	15	at Arkansas	W	44-17
Sept.	22	at Liberty	W	47-7
Sept.	29	Louisiana Tech	L	27-29
Oct.	6	at UTEP	W	27-24
Oct.	13	Southern Miss	W	30-7
Oct.	20	at UAB	L	21-29
Oct.	27	Rice	W	41-17
Nov.	10	at Old Dominion	L	31-34
Nov.	15	Florida Atlantic	W	41-38
Nov.	24	at UTSA	W	24-21
Dec.	15	vs. Utah State #	L	13-52

#New Mexico Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Deonte Simpson, WR, Beaumont, TX
2. Grayson Murphy, OLB, Dallas, TX
3. DeShawn Gaddie, CB, Arlington, TX
4. Gabriel Murphy, OLB, Dallas, TX
5. Asher Alberding, TE, Houston, TX
6. Oscar Adaway, RB, North Little Rock, AR
7. Taylor Jacobs, ILB, Grand Prairie, TX
8. Khatib Lyles, WR, El Paso, TX
9. Kealon Jackson, WR, Pearland, TX
10. Damon Ward, WR, Beaumont, TX

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	C-USA	NATIONAL
Scoring	34.6 ppg	1	26
Rushing	153.8 ypg	6	88
Passing	306.8 ypg	1	12
Total	460.5 ypg	2	20
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**C-USA**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	24.2 ppg	5	43
Rushing	119.8 ypg	5	18
Passing	254.8 ypg	11	100
Total	374.6 ypg	6	48
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**C-USA**	**NATIONAL**
+5	+0.38	2	35

STAT CORNER

40

UNT allowed four or more yards on only 40% of carries (eighth in FBS) and stuffed runners at or behind the line on 26% of them (seventh).

OFFENSE New offensive coordinator Bodie Reeder called plays last season for Eastern Washington's high-powered offense, which averaged 528.2 yards and 43.1 points at the FCS level. Reeder moves to the FBS stage in a position where he can succeed, guiding a North Texas offense that led Conference USA in scoring (34.6 ppg) last season.

Senior quarterback Mason Fine returns as UNT's all-time passer and the NCAA's active career leader with 9,417 yards. He gets back three of his top four wide receivers in Rico Bussey Jr. (68 receptions, 1,017 yards), Jaelon Darden (48, 575) and Michael Lawrence (32, 433), as well as tight end Kelvin Smith (29, 269). But the corps is heavy on slot receivers and light on outside targets.

All-C-USA running back DeAndre Torrey fits the passing offense well as a big-play runner and versatile receiver. He rushed for 977 yards along with 25 receptions and 18 total TDs (one on a kickoff return). All the weapons are there for the offense to hit another gear, with the exception of two gaping holes at tackle. Jacob Brammer, who started four games in an otherwise backup role last season, will slide into one tackle spot. Virginia Tech graduate transfer D'Andre Plantin could fill the other. Reeder will try to speed up the tempo, which could mask the inexperience at tackle and keep Fine healthy, which is a huge priority.

DEFENSE Defensive coordinator Troy Reffett's 3-3-5 scheme came of age last season, trimming its points allowed from 35.0 per game in 2017 to 24.2 in 2018. But the team's best defenders graduated, so the defense must be reset. That means replacing two defensive ends, two linebackers and two cornerbacks in the starting lineup from a unit that forced opponents into bad decisions. Reffett must be creative in utilizing his young players' athleticism without exposing their inexperience.

Senior defensive end LaDarius Hamilton will be a cornerstone after an all-conference season in which he recorded 11 tackles for a loss and 7.5 sacks. Senior safeties Khairi Muhammad and Taylor Robinson and junior nickel back/linebacker Tyreke Davis combined for seven of UNT's 18 interceptions, fifth most in FBS. Cam Johnson and Jordan Roberts may be talented enough to adequately fill both cornerback spots, which were held by a pair of all-league players last season.

SPECIALISTS UNT kickers made 82 percent of their field goals over the past five seasons, leaving a big kicking shoe to fill. Mason Reid, Ethan Mooney and Zach Williams will compete to keep up the trend. Punting is in much better shape with the return of senior Alvin Kenworthy.

FINAL ANALYSIS Coach Seth Littrell is suffering from too much success. After leading UNT to three straight bowls and back-to-back nine-win seasons, he lost five of his 10 assistant coaches in the offseason, including four to Power 5 schools. If UNT can protect Fine, the offense should keep pace with its previous output. But the defense almost certainly will take a step back; it's only a question of minimizing that regression.

Winning a tough road game at Louisiana Tech could put UNT in the West Division driver's seat. UNT finishes the regular season against defending division champion UAB in Denton, where it has an 11–1 record over the past two seasons.

Mason Fine

"They live and die on the quarterback play, more than any other team. He just makes great things happen with a mediocre cast."

— An opposing C-USA assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (8) — Returning Starters in Bold

WR	**8**	**Rico Bussey Jr. (Sr.)**	16	Jyaire Shorter (Fr.)
WR	1	Jaelon Darden (So.)	**32**	**Michael Lawrence (Sr.)**
WR	14	Greg White (So.)	18	Austin Ogunmakin (Fr.)
LT	62	D'Andre Plantin (Sr.)	71	Brian Parish (So.)
LG	**77**	**Elex Woodworth (Sr.)**	70	Thomas Preston (Sr.)
C	**60**	**Sosaia Mose (Sr.)**	65	Chad Hickson (Jr.)
RG	**72**	**Manase Mose (So.)**	74	Chandler Anthony (Jr.)
RT	56	Jacob Brammer (So.)	71	Brian Parish (So.)
TE	**9**	**Kelvin Smith (Sr.)**	88	Jason Pirtle (Jr.)
QB	**6**	**Mason Fine (Sr.)**	5	Jason Bean (Fr.)
RB	**13**	**DeAndre Torrey (Jr.)**	21	Nic Smith (Jr.)

DEFENSE (5)

DE	52	Darrian McMillan (Sr.)	90	Caleb Colvin (Jr.)
NT	97	Dion Novil (Jr.)	34	Bryce English (Sr.)
DE	**2**	**LaDarius Hamilton (Sr.)**	94	Tuulau Sa'afi (Sr.)
MLB	20	Williams LeMasters (Sr.)	**5**	**Tyreke Davis (Jr.)**
WLB	40	Mike Linehan (Sr.)	43	Larry Nixon (Fr.)
JACK	32	Joe Ozougwu (Jr.)	**48**	**Jamie King (Sr.)**
CB	22	Keelan Crosby (So.)	25	Jordan Roberts (So.)
CB	11	Cam Johnson (Jr.)	21	Quinn Whitlock (So.)
NB	39	Jameel Moore (Sr.)	29	Jaxon Gibbs (Fr.)
S	**4**	**Khairi Muhammad (Sr.)**	10	Makyle Sanders (Jr.)
S	**24**	**Taylor Robinson (Sr.)**	26	Alex Morris (So.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	47	Ethan Mooney (So.)	**KR**	13	DeAndre Torrey (Jr.)
P	36	Alvin Kenworthy (Sr.)	**PR**	1	Jaelon Darden (Jr.)

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Mason Fine, 469-303-3,793-5, 27 TDs
Rushing: DeAndre Torrey, 175 att., 977 yds., 15 TDs
Receiving: Rico Bussey Jr., 68 rec., 1,017 yds., 12 TDs
Tackles: Khairi Muhammad, 67
Sacks: LaDarius Hamilton, 7.5
Interceptions: Khairi Muhammad, 4

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Seth Littrell
Record at School: 23-17 (3 years)
Career Record: 23-17 (3 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Bodie Reeder
Defensive Coordinator: Troy Reffett
Denton, TX • Apogee Stadium (30,850)

North Texas Athletics

Rice **Owls**

National Forecast: **130** • C-USA West Prediction: **7** • Projected Record: **1-11, 1-7 C-USA**

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	30	at Army
Sept.	6	Wake Forest
Sept.	14	Texas #
Sept.	21	Baylor
Sept.	28	Louisiana Tech
Oct.	5	at UAB
Oct.	19	at UTSA
Oct.	26	Southern Miss
Nov.	2	Marshall
Nov.	16	at Middle Tennessee
Nov.	23	North Texas
Nov.	30	at UTEP

#NRG Stadium

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 2-11, 1-7 C-USA

Aug.	25	Prairie View A&M	W	31-28
Sept.	1	Houston	L	27-45
Sept.	8	at Hawaii	L	29-43
Sept.	22	at Southern Miss	L	22-40
Sept.	29	at Wake Forest	L	24-56
Oct.	6	UTSA	L	3-20
Oct.	13	UAB	L	0-42
Oct.	20	at FIU	L	17-36
Oct.	27	at North Texas	L	17-41
Nov.	3	UTEP	L	26-34
Nov.	10	at Louisiana Tech	L	13-28
Nov.	17	at LSU	L	10-42
Nov.	24	Old Dominion	W	27-13

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Jake Bailey, S, San Clemente, CA
2. De'Braylon Carroll, DT, Duncanville, TX
3. Jawan King, RB, Atlanta, TX
4. Zane Knipe, WR, Houston, TX
5. Jack Bradley, TE, Dallas, TX
6. Bradley Rozner, WR, Brenham, TX*
7. Hunter Henry, S, Austin, TX
8. Hunter Jones, C, Stockton, CA
9. Izeya Floyd, DT, Frisco, TX
10. Josh Pearcy, LB, Moorestown, NJ

*junior college transfer

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	C-USA	NATIONAL
Scoring	18.9 ppg	12	124
Rushing	143.6 ypg	7	98
Passing	174.8 ypg	13	111
Total	318.4 ypg	12	125
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**C-USA**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	36.0 ppg	14	112
Rushing	166.0 ypg	9	69
Passing	280.1 ypg	14	125
Total	446.1 ypg	13	103
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**C-USA**	**NATIONAL**
-4	-0.31	11	89

STAT CORNER

5.6

Opponents averaged 5.6 points per trip inside Rice's 40, third most in the country and easily the most in Conference USA.

OFFENSE The search for a starting quarterback will carry over into preseason camp in a likely two-man battle between Wiley Green and Tom Stewart. As a true freshman, Green threw for 621 yards as the Owls generously used the four-game redshirt rule, and Stewart is a strong-armed graduate transfer from Harvard, where he tied a school record with five touchdowns in a game against Columbia last season. Jovoni Johnson, a dual-threat incoming freshman, is a top-flight athlete who should see the field in some capacity.

There is no shortage of targets in the passing game with Austin Trammell and Aaron Cephus, who combined for 102 receptions with 1,197 yards and eight touchdowns; tight end Jordan Myers, who averaged 16.1 yards per catch last season; and the additions of Bradley Rozner, who led the junior college ranks with 13 touchdown receptions at Cisco College in Texas, and incoming freshman speedster Zane Knipe.

Juma Otoviano showed explosiveness with 224 yards rushing in a win over Old Dominion. He will team with senior Alston Walter in the backfield.

The offensive line returns three players with starting experience but will rely on graduate transfers Brian Chaffin (Stanford) and Nick Leverett (North Carolina Central). In addition to Chaffin, second-year coach Mike Bloomgren tapped into his Stanford ties to land fullback Reagan Williams in the offseason.

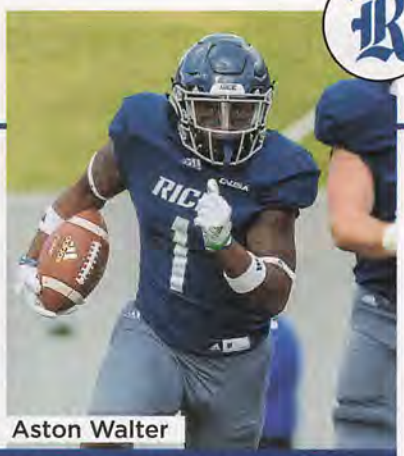
DEFENSE Some encouraging news: Bloomgren called the Owls defense "pretty freaking dominant" in the spring game, continuing an offseason in which the defense developed at a faster pace than the offense. A defensive line that has been a strength will need to be retooled following the transfers of Roe Wilkins and Zach Abercrumbia, but some of the concerns were erased in the spring with younger players stepping up along with expected contributors Anthony Ekpe, Myles Adams, Elijah Garcia and Trey Schuman. Ekpe will play the hybrid rush end.

At linebacker, Blaze Alldredge — the second-leading tackler in 2018 and MVP of the defense in the spring, according to Bloomgren — and Antonio Montero provide a solid nucleus inside.

Defensive coordinator Brian Smith was forced to throw freshmen and sophomores into the fire in the secondary last season, experience he hopes pays dividends. Safety is expected to be a strength with George Nyakwol, an "absolute star in the middle of the field," according to Bloomgren, and Prudy Calderon (four interceptions). The Owls also signed Naeem Smith, an All-American from Ellsworth Community College in Iowa. Cornerback Andrew Bird has shown big-play potential.

SPECIALISTS The kicking game will have an entirely new look with the departure of All-C-USA punter Jack Fox and placekicker Haden Tobola. Chris Barnes and TCU grad transfer Adam Nunez will compete for the punter job. At kicker, incoming freshman Zach Hoban will challenge Will Harrison and Nick McQuarry.

FINAL ANALYSIS The schedule — which features Army, Wake Forest, Texas and Baylor in nonconference action — is unforgiving and will make it difficult for the Owls to make much progress in the win column in 2019. Nobody said it was going to be an easy turnaround. At best, Bloomgren is probably looking at 2020 before the Owls can make a move in the C-USA West.



Aston Walter

"It's been interesting to watch (Mike) Bloomgren try to install the specific Stanford model that deep in Texas — it doesn't fit the region."

— An opposing C-USA assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (6)					Returning Starters in Bold
WR	10	**Austin Trammell (Jr.)**	83	**Rhett Cardwell (Jr.)**
WR	28	**Aaron Cephus (Jr.)**	11	Brendan Harmon (So.)
LT	71	Clay Servin (Fr.)	78	Jake Syptak (So.)
LG	73	**Cole Garcia (So.)**	58	**Shea Baker (So.)**
C		Brian Chaffin (Sr.)	53	Cole Elms (Sr.)
RG	55	Nick Leverett (Sr.)	58	Shea Baker (So.)
RT	77	**Uzoma Osuji (Jr.)**		Justin Gooseberry (Sr.)
TE	82	Jaeger Bull (So.)	7	Jordan Myers (Jr.)
QB		Tom Stewart (Sr.)	5	Wiley Green (Fr.)
RB	21	Juma Otoviano (So.)	1	Aston Walter (Sr.)
FB		Reagan Williams (Sr.)	48	Jacob Doddridge (Fr.)
DEFENSE (7)				
DE	99	Myles Adams (Sr.)	52	JaVante Hubbard (Jr.)
NT	92	**Elijah Garcia (Jr.)**	11	Cameron Valentine (Fr.)
DE	98	Trey Schuman (So.)	91	Ikenna Enechukwu (Fr.)
OLB	33	Anthony Ekpe (Jr.)	10	Kenneth Orji (So.)
SLB	17	**Treshawn Chamberlain (So.)**	5	Dasharm Newsome (Jr.)
MLB	1	**Antonio Montero (So.)**	8	**Dylan Silcox (Jr.)**
WLB	55	**Blaze Alldredge (Jr.)**	42	Dylan James (Jr.)
CB	15	Andrew Bird (Fr.)	12	D'Angelo Ellis (Jr.)
CB	18	Tyrae Thornton (So.)	13	Collin Whitaker (Jr.)
S	20	**George Nyakwol (Jr.)**	5	Dasharm Newsome (Jr.)
S	4	**Prudy Calderon (So.)**	3	Naeem Smith (Jr.)
SPECIAL TEAMS				
K	25	Will Harrison (So.)	KR 10	Austin Trammell (Jr.)
P	86	Chris Barnes (Sr.)	PR 10	Austin Trammell (Jr.)

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Wiley Green, 88-45-621-4, 3 TDs
Rushing: Aston Walter, 133 att., 564 yds., 4 TDs
Receiving: Austin Trammell, 62 rec., 632 yds., 3 TDs
Tackles: George Nyakwol, 67
Sacks: Anthony Ekpe, 6.0
Interceptions: Prudy Calderon, 4

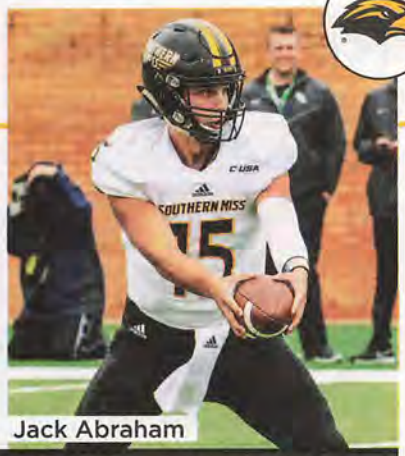
TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Mike Bloomgren
Record at School: 2-11 (1 year)
Career Record: Jerry Mack
Offensive Coordinator: Jerry Mack
Defensive Coordinator: Brian Smith
Houston, TX • Rice Stadium (47,000)

Rice Athletics

Southern Miss **Golden Eagles**

National Forecast: **85** • C-USA West Prediction: **2** • Projected Record: **8-4, 6-2 C-USA**



Jack Abraham

"They've got war daddies on defense; they have real SEC size at some spots. If they get the offense going, they could win the conference."

— An opposing C-USA assistant coach

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	Alcorn State
Sept.	7	at Mississippi State
Sept.	14	at Troy
Sept.	21	at Alabama
Sept.	28	UTEP
Oct.	12	North Texas
Oct.	19	at Louisiana Tech
Oct.	26	at Rice
Nov.	9	UAB
Nov.	16	at UTSA
Nov.	23	Western Kentucky
Nov.	30	at Florida Atlantic

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 6-5, 5-3 C-USA

Sept.	1	Jackson State	W	55-7
Sept.	8	ULM	L	20-21
Sept.	22	Rice	W	40-22
Sept.	29	at Auburn	L	13-24
Oct.	13	at North Texas	L	7-30
Oct.	20	UTSA	W	27-17
Oct.	27	at Charlotte	L	17-20
Nov.	3	Marshall	W	26-24
Nov.	10	at UAB (ot)	L	23-26
Nov.	17	Louisiana Tech	W	21-20
Nov.	24	at UTEP	W	39-7

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Jaden Johnson, QB, Memphis, TN
2. Luke Baker, TE, Naples, FL
3. Khalique Washington, OT, Lebanon, PA*
4. Coker Wright, C, Brookhaven, MS
5. Antavious Willis, ATH, Camden, MS
6. Louis Smith, C, D'Iberville, MS
7. T.Q. Newsome, QB, Gulfport, MS
8. Chris Scruggs Jr., WR, Tampa, FL
9. Gerquan Scott, OT, Mobile, AL
10. Tre Johnson, OT, Orlando, FL*

*junior college transfer

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	C-USA	NATIONAL
Scoring	26.2 ppg	8	90
Rushing	112.6 ypg	13	121
Passing	255.0 ypg	4	40
Total	367.6 ypg	9	99
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**C-USA**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	19.8 ppg	2	19
Rushing	102.7 ypg	1	6
Passing	175.6 ypg	1	10
Total	278.4 ypg	1	3
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**C-USA**	**NATIONAL**
-1	-0.09	10	80

STAT CORNER

16.0

All or nothing: Southern Miss averaged 34.7 points per game in six wins in 2018 but a ghastly 16.0 per game in five losses.

OFFENSE Southern Miss fielded one of the greenest offenses in the nation in 2018, and it showed: Scoring fell for the third consecutive season as the Golden Eagles dropped into the bottom half of Conference USA in both total offense and yards per play. In 2019, youth is the least of the Eagles' concerns. The incumbent quarterback, junior Jack Abraham, led the nation in completion percentage (73.1) in his first year as a starter, but he also struggled with injuries and pedestrian arm strength; he was pushed in the spring by sophomore Tate Whatley (three starts in 2018) and early enrollee Jaden Johnson. The top backs, Trivenskey Mosley and Steven Anderson, combined for just four runs of 20 yards or more. The top receiver, Quez Watkins, left the team in the spring for academic reasons with no definite return date.

And while the offensive line is certainly experienced — seven players who started multiple games in 2018 are back — exactly who will line up where is anyone's guess. None of the holdovers held down the same position for more than half the season. Nor are they necessarily guaranteed a spot under new OL coach Ryan Stanchek: USM signed seven O-linemen, three of them from the junior college ranks and all of whom will have a chance to contribute right away.

DEFENSE Compounding the frustration on offense was the defense's emergence as a legitimate strength. Under first-year coordinator Tim Billings, Southern Miss ranked in the top 10 nationally in total defense, rushing defense and pass efficiency, while allowing fewer first downs than any other FBS team.

A big part of that success was the revamped secondary, led by a pair of junior college transfers, cornerback Ty Williams and safety Ky'el Hemby, who entrenched themselves in the lineup from the get-go. They're both back after notching a combined nine interceptions, along with All-C-USA candidates on the line (end Jacques Turner, a first-teamer in 2018) and at linebacker (Racheem Boothe, the only remaining defensive starter from 2017). The most glaring vacancy is at Wolf end, a pass-rushing role opposite Turner; ideally, that will fall to grad transfer Torrence Brown, a former starter at Penn State who's coming out of medical retirement for his final year of eligibility.

SPECIALISTS After handling kickoffs last year, junior Briggs Bourgeois will take over placekicking duties full time from the departed Parker Shaunfield, the most accurate kicker in school history. The fate of the return game hinges largely on whether Watkins returns to the fold — if he's available, he's a big play waiting to happen.

FINAL ANALYSIS Southern Miss has finished above .500 in each of Jay Hopson's three seasons as head coach. But the Eagles were snubbed for a bowl bid in 2018, and Hopson was desperate enough to turn the offense around that he tried in February to hire disgraced former Baylor coach Art Briles as the new play caller, a move that generated negative headlines. Patience is growing thin.

The good news is that, in terms of returning production, USM boasts one of the most experienced lineups in the country. Even a modest rebound on offense should make the Eagles serious contenders in C-USA's West Division. The bad news is the schedule: After a three-game stretch at Mississippi State, Troy and Alabama, the margin for error in conference play will be razor thin.

DEPTH CHART

Returning Starters in Bold

OFFENSE (7)				
WR	80	**Jordan Mitchell (Sr.)**	18	De'Michael Harris (Sr.)
WR	87	**Tim Jones (Jr.)**	13	Neil McLaurin (Sr.)
WR	2	Jaylond Adams (So.)	82	Trevor Terry (Sr.)
LT	79	**Drake Dorbeck (Sr.)**	50	Woodlyson Alcius (Jr.)
LG	76	**Ty Pollard (Sr.)**	75	Travion Clayton (So.)
C	57	**Trace Clopton (So.)**	58	Grey Best (Jr.)
RG	68	Bryce Foxworth (Jr.)		Khalique Washington (Jr.)
RT	63	**Arvin Fletcher (Jr.)**	71	Paul Gainer Jr. (Jr.)
TE		Naricuss Driver (Jr.)		Luke Baker (Fr.)
QB	15	**Jack Abraham (Jr.)**	6	Tate Whatley (So.)
RB	22	Trivenskey Mosley (So.)	12	Steven Anderson (So.)
DEFENSE (6)				
DE	99	**Jacques Turner (Jr.)**	2	Nick Dawson (Sr.)
DT	55	**Demarrio Smith (Sr.)**	3	Tahj Sykes (So.)
DT	51	Von'Darius Freeman (Sr.)	90	Junior Carswell (Fr.)
DE		Torrence Brown (Sr.)	84	Ethan Edmondson (Fr.)
LB	41	**Racheem Boothe (Jr.)**	34	Ty'Ree Evans (Jr.)
LB	47	Santrell Latham (So.)	32	Hayes Maples (Fr.)
CB	7	**Ty Williams (Sr.)**	29	Ernest Gunn (Sr.)
CB	21	**Rachuan Mitchell (Jr.)**	39	WyDale Flott (Jr.)
NB	12	D.Q. Thomas (Jr.)	6	J.J. Jones (Fr.)
SS	19	**Ky'el Hemby (Jr.)**	46	Nicario Harper (So.)
FS	15	Shannon Showers (So.)	25	Tyler Barnes (Jr.)
SPECIAL TEAMS				
K	40	Briggs Bourgeois (Jr.)	KR 18	De'Michael Harris (Sr.)
P	93	Zac Everett (Jr.)	PR 2	Jaylond Adams (So.)

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Jack Abraham, 305-203-2,347-10, 15 TDs
Rushing: Trivenskey Mosley, 99 att., 494 yds., 1 TD
Receiving: Tim Jones, 42 rec., 508 yds., 1 TD
Tackles: Ky'el Hemby, 51
Sacks: Jacques Turner, 5.0
Interceptions: Ky'el Hemby, 6

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Jay Hopson
Record at School: 21-16 (3 years)
Career Record: 53-33 (7 years)
Offensive Coordinators: Buster Faulkner, Scotty Walden
Defensive Coordinators: Tim Billings, Derek Nicholson
Hattiesburg, MS • M.M. Roberts Stadium (36,000)

Southern Miss Athletics

UAB **Blazers**

National Forecast: **86** • C-USA West Prediction: **3** • Projected Record: **8-4, 5-3 C-USA**

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	29	Alabama State
Sept.	7	at Akron
Sept.	21	South Alabama
Sept.	28	at Western Kentucky
Oct.	5	Rice
Oct.	12	at UTSA
Oct.	19	Old Dominion
Nov.	2	at Tennessee
Nov.	9	at Southern Miss
Nov.	16	UTEP
Nov.	23	Louisiana Tech
Nov.	30	at North Texas

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 11-3, 7-1 C-USA

Aug.	30	Savannah State	W	52-0
Sept.	8	at Coastal Carolina	L	24-47
Sept.	15	Tulane	W	31-24
Sept.	29	Charlotte	W	28-7
Oct.	6	at Louisiana Tech	W	28-7
Oct.	13	at Rice	W	42-0
Oct.	20	North Texas	W	29-21
Oct.	27	at UTEP	W	19-0
Nov.	3	UTSA	W	52-3
Nov.	10	Southern Miss (ot)	W	26-23
Nov.	17	at Texas A&M	L	20-41
Nov.	24	at MTSU	L	3-27
Dec.	1	at MTSU #	W	27-25
Dec.	18	vs. No. Illinois %	W	37-13

#C-USA Championship %Boca Raton Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Jayme Simmons, OT, Alabaster, AL
2. Jammal Abrams, DE, Birmingham, AL
3. Jordan Smith, LB, Lithonia, GA*
4. Will Conner, LB, Alabaster, AL
5. Rashard Revels, S, Moultrie, GA
6. Damien Miller, S, Fairfield, AL
7. Alex Wright, LB, Elba, AL
8. Bryson Lucero, QB, Loma, CO
9. Larry Smith, LB, Miami, FL
10. Markus Grossman, WR, Frederick, MD

*junior college transfer

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	C-USA	NATIONAL
Scoring	29.9 ppg	5	59
Rushing	201.3 ypg	2	34
Passing	204.4 ypg	10	94
Total	405.7 ypg	5	65
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**C-USA**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	17.0 ppg	1	7
Rushing	118.1 ypg	4	17
Passing	181.1 ypg	2	14
Total	299.2 ypg	2	9
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**C-USA**	**NATIONAL**
0	0.00	8	69

STAT CORNER

25

UAB had won 26 games in the eight years prior to Bill Clark's arrival. Clark has won 25 in five years — and in only three seasons.

OFFENSE The offense flourished last season when UAB turned to then-redshirt freshman Tyler Johnston III at quarterback over senior A.J. Erdely. Johnston led the Blazers to a Conference USA championship and threw for 373 yards in the 37–13 Boca Raton Bowl win over Northern Illinois. His arm strength and deep ball accuracy took the Blazers offense to another level, and he was also UAB's second-leading rusher last season. He loses his top five receivers, but the Blazers expect outside receivers Myron Mitchell and Austin Watkins along with slot Kendall Parham to break out and keep the passing game strong.

Physical running back Spencer Brown is closing in on UAB rushing records and anchors a deep group. Third-year starter Hayden Pittman highlights the tight end group, and while UAB doesn't throw there often, it is a key position for the run game. Center Lee Dufour is UAB's lone returning starter on the offensive line, but interior players Greg Fecanin, David Galten and Andrew Smith all have game experience.

DEFENSE Garrett Marino signed with UAB in July 2015, two years before the Blazers returned to action after a two-year hiatus. Now, he's one of few key returning players on the defense and is expected to be a force on the line. His leadership is important for young players Fish McWilliams and Antonio Moultrie, who are being forced into bigger roles but have been with the program for a year. Newcomer Tony Fair is expected to help plug up the middle.

Junior Kris Moll had a breakout season last year at the Star position, but he moves back to his original spot at linebacker. Moll should be one of Conference USA's top defensive players this season. Former walk-on Fitzgerald Mofor and Thomas Johnston, the quarterback's younger brother, are heading into their third year on this defense and provide the consistency and attention to detail that the staff desires.

If ex-Florida linebacker Jordan Smith can get cleared after signing in December, he's expected to be a key contributor at the Jack position. Someone from the committee of Johnston, Jalen Rayam, DeAnjelo Anderson and Kyle Harrell must emerge at this key pass-rushing position on the UAB defense.

Brontae Harris is one of the top defensive backs in the conference. Starling Thomas V and CD Daniels are primed for bigger roles at corner along with safeties Grayson Cash and Will Boler. Jarrion Street has moved to Star, where he'll push Dy'jonn Turner.

SPECIALISTS Nick Vogel is back for his third season as the starting kicker. He was second in the nation in touchback percentage (88.8), but he needs to work on his accuracy beyond 40 yards. Kyle Greenwell is back at punter, and UAB expects a big year in the return game from Thomas and Watkins.

FINAL ANALYSIS The big question last year was if UAB could keep winning while no longer an underdog. The Blazers answered that with a school-record 11 wins, but they lost several key players to graduation. UAB used its depth and the four-game redshirt rule to its advantage, preserving a year for players such as McWilliams and Watkins. The key to UAB's continued success will be the chemistry across both lines. The team is still dominated by juniors and seniors, but if several sophomores emerge, the Blazers will contend for another conference championship.

Spencer Brown

"Last year you saw a really deep, really mature team that was just more experienced than anyone else. They're really solid in their schemes."

— An opposing C-USA assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (3)					Returning Starters in Bold
WR	6	Austin Watkins (Jr.)	86	TD Marshall (Jr.)
WR	87	Myron Mitchell (Jr.)	23	Kevin Davis (So.)
WR	8	Kendall Parham (Sr.)	10	Sederian Copeland (Sr.)
LT	53	Colby Ragland (Jr.)	62	Sidney Wells (Jr.)
LG	50	David Galten (Sr.)	61	Matthew Trehern (Jr.)
C	**72**	**Lee Dufour (Sr.)**	66	Greg Fecanin (Jr.)
RG	66	Greg Fecanin (Jr.)	55	Andrew Smith (Jr.)
RT	73	Patrick Nuss (So.)	62	Sidney Wells (Jr.)
TE	**38**	**Hayden Pittman (Jr.)**	43	Gerrit Prince (Jr.)
QB	17	Tyler Johnston III (So.)	9	Dylan Hopkins (Fr.)
RB	**28**	**Spencer Brown (Jr.)**	2	Lucious Stanley (So.)
DEFENSE (5)				
DE	1	**Garrett Marino (Sr.)**	8	Michael Wright (Sr.)
NT	91	Fish McWilliams (Fr.)	90	Tony Fair (Jr.)
DT	44	Antonio Moultrie (So.)	95	Mi'Cario Stanley (Jr.)
JACK	5	Thomas Johnston (Jr.)	30	Jalen Rayam (Fr.)
LB	**52**	**Fitzgerald Mofor (Sr.)**	24	Deshaun Oliver Jr. (Fr.)
LB	**6**	**Kris Moll (Jr.)**	51	Adrienne Talan (Sr.)
CB	**2**	**Brontae Harris (Jr.)**	9	A.J. Brooks (Sr.)
CB	4	Starling Thomas V (So.)	3	CD Daniels (So.)
FS	12	Grayson Cash (So.)	11	David Acfalle (So.)
SS	17	Will Boler (So.)	21	Will Dawkins (Sr.)
STAR	14	**Dy'jonn Turner (Jr.)**	7	Jarrion Street (Sr.)
SPECIAL TEAMS				
K	19	Nick Vogel (Sr.)	KR	4 Starling Thomas V (So.)
P	98	Kyle Greenwell (So.)	PR	6 Austin Watkins (Jr.)

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Tyler Johnston III, 140-80-1,323-9, 11 TDs
Rushing: Spencer Brown, 272 att., 1,227 yds., 16 TDs
Receiving: Kendall Parham, 14 rec., 197 yds., 0 TDs
Tackles: Fitzgerald Mofor, 75
Sacks: Garrett Marino, 3.5
Interceptions: Brontae Harris, 2

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Bill Clark
Record at School: 25-14 (3 years)
Career Record: 36-18 (4 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Bryant Vincent
Defensive Coordinator: David Reeves
Birmingham, AL • Legion Field (72,000)

UAB Athletics

UTEP **Miners**

National Forecast: **128** • C-USA West Prediction: **6** • Projected Record: **2-10, 1-7 C-USA**

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	Houston Baptist
Sept.	7	at Texas Tech
Sept.	21	Nevada
Sept.	28	at Southern Miss
Oct.	5	UTSA
Oct.	19	at FIU
Oct.	26	Louisiana Tech
Nov.	2	at North Texas
Nov.	9	Charlotte
Nov.	16	at UAB
Nov.	23	at New Mexico State
Nov.	30	Rice

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 1-11, 1-7 C-USA

Sept.	1	Northern Arizona	L	10-30
Sept.	8	at UNLV	L	24-52
Sept.	15	at Tennessee	L	0-24
Sept.	22	New Mexico State	L	20-27
Sept.	29	at UTSA	L	21-30
Oct.	6	North Texas	L	24-27
Oct.	20	at Louisiana Tech	L	24-31
Oct.	27	UAB	L	0-19
Nov.	3	at Rice	W	34-26
Nov.	10	Middle Tennessee	L	32-48
Nov.	17	at Western Kentucky	L	16-40
Nov.	24	Southern Miss	L	7-39

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Deion Hankins, RB, El Paso, TX
2. McKel Broussard, S, Sherman Oaks, CA
3. Jerome Wilson, LB, Rancho Cucamonga, CA
4. TJ Goodwin, QB, Houston, TX
5. Jalen Rudolph, DT, Los Angeles, CA
6. Armonie Brown, DE, Refugio, TX
7. Robert Corner III, CB, Compton, CA*
8. Jeremiah Byers, OL, Austin, TX
9. Luke Laufenberg, TE, Argyle, TX*
10. Duron Lowe, CB, Shawnee, KS*

*junior college transfer

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	C-USA	NATIONAL
Scoring	17.7 ppg	13	127
Rushing	123.7 ypg	12	116
Passing	184.0 ypg	11	103
Total	307.7 ypg	13	126
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**C-USA**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	32.8 ppg	12	99
Rushing	195.8 ypg	13	96
Passing	198.9 ypg	5	34
Total	394.7 ypg	9	68
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**C-USA**	**NATIONAL**
-17	-1.42	14	129

STAT CORNER

-18.6

UTEP had a minus-2 turnover margin or worse in seven games. Average scoring margin: minus-18.6. (In the other games: minus-10.1)

OFFENSE The UTEP offense did improve in coach Dana Dimel's first season, but some of that was simply the case of a very low bar. The Miners were a bottom-five offense nationally in both yards and points last year, but given that they were dead last by a large margin in 2017, they do feel like they are headed the right direction.

The biggest problem last year was a string of injuries that decimated the offensive line and didn't provide much of a crutch for junior college transfer quarterbacks Kai Locksley (the son of new Maryland coach Mike Locksley) and Brandon Jones. The upshot is that UTEP should go into this season with nine offensive linemen who have started games, including veterans Derron Gatewood at center and Greg Long at left tackle, both of whom missed the entire 2018 season.

Locksley is also on track to be healthy after injuries to both ankles that hampered him last season.

Health in the line should add up to a leap forward in the running game, as tailback Quardraiz Wadley has been good when he's had blocking.

The questions are at receiver, where once again UTEP has a lot of names to choose from but not a lot of proven production. Keynan Foster and Tre'Shon Wolf seem most likely to emerge.

DEFENSE UTEP's defense was on track for one of its best campaigns in years in 2018 before injuries finally caught up with the Miners, but they do have a better base to build from. The problem is that the best players on that defense, including the top four tacklers, graduated, and while there are the usual expectations of making strides in the second year of a new system, there is a lot of production to replace.

That begins at linebacker, but the Miners do welcome two players back from injury who missed much of last year in Jayson VanHook and Dylan Parsee, who join returning starter Sione Tupou.

The secondary was also decimated by graduation, and that was the focus of junior college recruiting, particularly at corner, where transfers Duron Lowe and Miles Banks could make their Division I starting debuts in the opener. Safeties Michael Lewis and Justin Rogers are old hands.

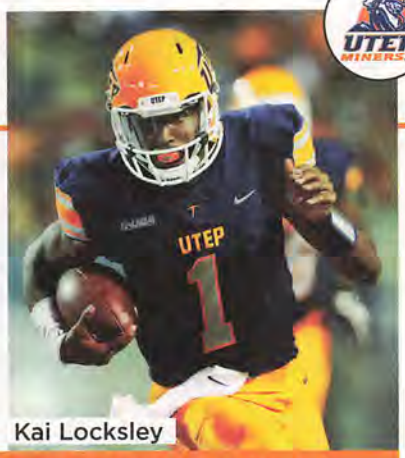
The line has a pair of returning senior starters in Denzel Chukwukelu and Chris Richardson, who have made the move from tackle to end.

The Miners need to force more turnovers; they were minus-17 in turnover margin last year.

SPECIALISTS UTEP was inconsistent on special teams last year but does have some confidence in incumbent punter Mitchell Crawford and placekicker Gavin Baechle, who is making the step up from kickoff specialist. The issue will be to find returners, particularly on punts.

FINAL ANALYSIS The Miners will see both sides of a rebuilding coin in 2019, as their offense returns most of its pieces from a unit that struggled while the defense is turning over personnel after a decent season. Both have the hope that there will be a natural improvement in the second year under Dimel.

If Locksley can fulfill his potential, if the Miners can stay healthy and if the defensive improvement proves to be the product of a system that better fits the personnel, UTEP has a chance to be closer to .500 than winless. That would be a significant step.



Kai Locksley

"They've got a long road ahead of them. Last year they didn't really seem to be an organized team. ... That roster is bare."

— An opposing C-USA assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (7)				Returning Starters in Bold
WR	5	**Keynan Foster (Sr.)**	11	Tre'Shon Wolf (So.)
WR	9	Alan Busey (Sr.)	7	Kavika Johnson (Sr.)
LT	77	Greg Long (Sr.)	74	Bijan Hosseini (Sr.)
LG	73	**Bobby DeHaro (So.)**	55	Gamaliel Barboza (So.)
C	65	Derron Gatewood (Sr.)	69	**Markos Lujan (Sr.)**
RG	61	**Ruben Guerra (Sr.)**	79	Elijah Klein (Fr.)
RT	68	**Zuri Henry (So.)**	76	Darta Lee (Jr.)
TE	45	Trent Thompson (So.)	87	Christian Buckingham (Sr.)
QB	1	**Kai Locksley (Sr.)**	8	Brandon Jones (Sr.)
RB	4	**Quardraiz Wadley (Sr.)**		Deion Hankins (Fr.)
FB	45	Trent Thompson (So.)	35	Forest McKee (Jr.)
DEFENSE (5)				
DE	11	**Denzel Chukwukelu (Sr.)**	23	Praise Amaewhule (Fr.)
DT	59	Dedrick Simpson (So.)	15	Tiano Tialavea (Sr.)
DE	99	**Chris Richardson (Sr.)**	32	Christian Johnson (So.)
OLB	1	Joe Jay Smith (Jr.)	57	Barron Wortham Jr. (Jr.)
ILB	5	**Sione Tupou (So.)**	47	Stephen Forester (Sr.)
ILB	6	Dylan Parsee (Sr.)	7	Kalaii Griffin (Sr.)
OLB	9	Jayson VanHook (Jr.)	19	Treyvon Hughes (Sr.)
CB	8	Miles Banks (Jr.)	20	Ray Walters (Fr.)
CB	29	Duron Lowe (Jr.)	18	Robert Corner III (Jr.)
SS	2	**Michael Lewis (Sr.)**	4	Broderick Harrell (Jr.)
FS	13	**Justin Rogers (Sr.)**	21	Justin Prince (So.)
SPECIAL TEAMS				
K	40	Gavin Baechle (So.)	KR 29	Erin Portillo (Jr.)
P	46	Mitchell Crawford (Sr.)	PR 5	Keynan Foster (Sr.)

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Kai Locksley, 169-83-937-9, 3 TDs
Rushing: Quardraiz Wadley, 123 att., 627 yds., 7 TDs
Receiving: Keynan Foster, 18 rec., 313 yds., 2 TDs
Tackles: Sione Tupou, 60
Sacks: Denzel Chukwukelu, Dylan Parsee, 2.0
Interceptions: Justin Rogers, 1

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Dana Dimel
Record at School: 1-11 (1 year)
Career Record: 31-50 (7 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Mike Canales
Defensive Coordinator: Mike Cox
El Paso, TX • Sun Bowl (51,500)

UTEP Athletics

UTSA **Roadrunners**

National Forecast: **119** • C-USA West Prediction: **5** • Projected Record: **4-8, 3-5 C-USA**

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	Incarnate Word
Sept.	7	at Baylor
Sept.	14	Army
Sept.	21	at North Texas
Oct.	5	at UTEP
Oct.	12	UAB
Oct.	19	Rice
Nov.	2	at Texas A&M
Nov.	9	at Old Dominion
Nov.	16	Southern Miss
Nov.	23	Florida Atlantic
Nov.	30	at Louisiana Tech

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 3-9, 2-6 C-USA

Sept.	1	at Arizona State	L	7-49
Sept.	8	Baylor	L	20-37
Sept.	15	at Kansas State	L	17-41
Sept.	22	Texas State	W	25-21
Sept.	29	UTEP	W	30-21
Oct.	6	at Rice	W	20-3
Oct.	13	Louisiana Tech	L	3-31
Oct.	20	at Southern Miss	L	17-27
Nov.	3	at UAB	L	3-52
Nov.	10	FIU	L	7-45
Nov.	17	at Marshall	L	0-23
Nov.	24	North Texas	L	21-24

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Dywan Griffin, WR, New Orleans, LA
2. Rashad Wisdom, S, Converse, TX
3. Trevor Harmanson, OLB, Dickinson, TX*
4. Sincere McCormick, RB, Converse, TX
5. Ronnie Jackson, RB, New Orleans, LA
6. De'Corian Clark, WR, Fort Worth, TX
7. Leroy Watson, TE, Snellville, GA*
8. Lowell Narcisse, QB, Saint James, LA*
9. Suddin Sapien, QB, Midland, TX
10. Cedric Claiborne, OT, Houston, TX

*junior college transfer

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	C-USA	NATIONAL
Scoring	14.2 ppg	14	129
Rushing	87.3 ypg	14	128
Passing	159.8 ypg	14	118
Total	247.1 ypg	14	130
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**C-USA**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	31.2 ppg	10	87
Rushing	160.3 ypg	7	60
Passing	275.3 ypg	13	123
Total	435.5 ypg	12	96
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**C-USA**	**NATIONAL**
+1	+0.08	6	57

STAT CORNER

-3.1

UTSA gained 1.7 fewer yards per play in 2018 and allowed 1.4 more. The resulting minus-3.1 margin was second worst in FBS.

OFFENSE There is nowhere for the UTSA offense to go but up. After his team ranked last in the nation in total offense in 2018, fourth-year coach Frank Wilson has to rediscover some punch after an injury-plagued season.

Frank Harris, a left-handed, dual-threat QB who missed 2018 due to a knee injury last spring, is expected to win the starting job and could give UTSA more of a threat in the passing game. Harris is an exceptional runner but also possesses nice touch. Another hope for improvement comes from the offensive line, which returns almost intact one year after taking some lumps as an inexperienced group. Josh Dunlop and Spencer Burford may compete for all-conference honors.

The wide receiver group has talent. Tykee Ogle-Kellogg and Tariq Woolen are a pair of tall wideouts who flashed potential as freshmen last season. Brenden Brady and B.J. Daniels will anchor a rushing attack that must be more productive if UTSA is going to compete.

DEFENSE The defensive numbers were not great for UTSA last season, but part of that had to do with the offense not holding up its end of the bargain. The Roadrunners return six starters, and with some reasonable improvement from the offense, the defense could climb in the national rankings after finishing No. 87 in points allowed at 31.2.

The defensive line will be the strength of the team; it has both depth and star power. Defensive ends Lorenzo Dantzler and Jarrod Carter-McLin both have a chance to be all-league players, and the four-man unit runs eight deep. Expect the second team to get multiple series per game, keeping players up front fresh.

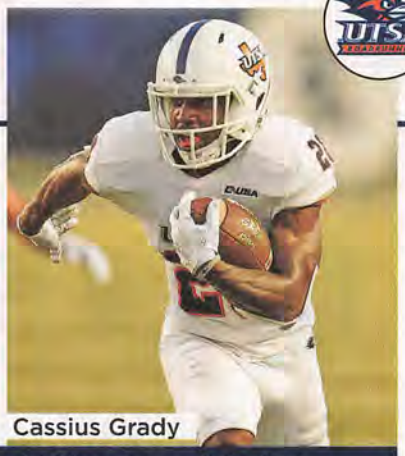
UTSA plays a 4-2-5 alignment and lost both linebackers. Andrew Martel has moved from safety and will likely take the Will linebacker spot, with Donovan Perkins replacing Josiah Tauaefa at the Mike.

The secondary, like the offensive line, suffered some growing pains in 2018. Carl Austin, a starter in 2017 who missed last year due to injury, was impressive in the spring at safety. Three starting corners return, including interception leader Cassius Grady.

SPECIALISTS UTSA will have new faces in the kicking game after punter Yannis Routsas graduated and kicker Jared Sackett transferred to Arkansas. Lucas Dean appears to have won the punting job in the spring, while the kicking situation remains up in the air. The Roadrunners may be looking for a transfer to shore up the field goal spot in the summer. Wide receiver Brett Winnegan, the team's fastest player, is back after missing all of 2018 with a wrist injury. He has returned kicks for three seasons.

FINAL ANALYSIS After recording five C-USA wins and landing in a bowl game in his first season, Wilson has seen his team slip to three C-USA wins in 2017 and two in 2018. Injuries certainly played a part in last season's 3–9 finish.

If Harris is indeed the answer at quarterback, the linebackers develop behind a strong defensive line and the offensive line progresses, UTSA should improve. The nonconference slate is daunting, with Texas A&M, Baylor and Army on the docket, so a bowl game might be out of reach. But five wins and a .500 C-USA mark are certainly attainable and would show some tangible progress.



Cassius Grady

"Frank Wilson is one of the best recruiters in the game, but the product has never really matched the talent they've brought in."

— An opposing C-USA assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (6)					Returning Starters in Bold
WR	11	Tykee Ogle-Kellogg (So.)	3	Tariq Woolen (So.)
WR	2	Sheldon Jones (So.)	19	Blaze Moorhead (Sr.)
WR	16	Kirk Johnson Jr. (Jr.)	20	Brett Winnegan (Sr.)
LT	70	Jalyn Galmore (Sr.)	66	Dominic Pastucci (Jr.)
LG	**74**	**Spencer Burford (So.)**	67	Ahofitu Maka (So.)
C	**61**	**Kevin Davis (So.)**	75	Bosah Osakwe (Jr.)
RG	**64**	**Josh Dunlop (Sr.)**	58	Terrell Haynes (Fr.)
RT	**65**	**Treyvion Shannon (Sr.)**	78	Josh Oatis (Jr.)
TE	**87**	**Gavin Sharp (So.)**	89	Leroy Watson (Jr.)
QB	7	Frank Harris (So.)	**14**	**Cordale Grundy (Sr.)**
RB	22	Brenden Brady (So.)	33	B.J. Daniels (Jr.)
DEFENSE (6)				
DE	**91**	**Jarrod Carter-McLin (Sr.)**	90	Eric Banks (Sr.)
DT	**99**	**Baylen Baker (Sr.)**	95	Jaylon Haynes (Jr.)
NG	92	King Newton (Sr.)	50	Brandon Matterson (So.)
DE	**98**	**Lorenzo Dantzler (Jr.)**	45	DeQuarius Henry (Jr.)
MLB	43	Donovan Perkins (So.)	41	De'Marco Guidry (So.)
WLB	12	Andrew Martel (Sr.)	47	Jarrett Preston (Fr.)
CB	**28**	**Cassius Grady (Sr.)**	26	Corey Mayfield Jr. (So.)
CB	**29**	**Clayton Johnson (Sr.)**	27	Teddrick McGhee (Jr.)
CB	**21**	**Brenndan Johnson (Jr.)**	30	Stanley Dye Jr. (Sr.)
S	25	Carl Austin (Sr.)	17	Vance Vallair (So.)
S	1	Kelechi Nwachuku (Fr.)	6	SaVion Harris (Jr.)
SPECIAL TEAMS				
K	37	Lucas Dean (Fr.)	**KR** 19	Blaze Moorhead (Sr.)
P	43	Erik Baughman (So.)	**PR** 20	Brett Winnegan (Sr.)

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Cordale Grundy, 220-111-989-3, 5 TDs
Rushing: B.J. Daniels, 87 att., 322 yds., 3 TDs
Receiving: Kirk Johnson Jr., 20 rec., 137 yds., 0 TDs
Tackles: Cassius Grady, 45; Andrew Martel, 45
Sacks: DeQuarius Henry, 4.0
Interceptions: Cassius Grady, 4

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Frank Wilson
Record at School: 15-21 (3 years)
Career Record: 15-21 (3 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Jeff Kastl
Defensive Coordinator: Jason Rollins
San Antonio, TX • Alamodome (65,000)

Jeff Huehn/UTSA Athletics

MAC *Preview*

East	*Predicted Order of Finish*	West
1 *Ohio* **BOBCATS** 9-4, 6-2 MAC		1 *Toledo* **ROCKETS** 8-5, 6-2 MAC
2 *Buffalo* **BULLS** 6-6, 5-3 MAC		2 *Western Michigan* **BRONCOS** 8-4, 6-2 MAC
3 *Miami* **REDHAWKS** 5-7, 4-4 MAC		3 *Northern Illinois* **HUSKIES** 6-6, 5-3 MAC
4 *Kent State* **GOLDEN FLASHES** 4-8, 3-5 MAC		4 *Eastern Michigan* **EAGLES** 6-6, 5-3 MAC
5 *Akron* **ZIPS** 3-9, 2-6 MAC		5 *Ball State* **CARDINALS** 4-8, 3-5 MAC
6 *Bowling Green* **FALCONS** 2-10, 1-7 MAC		6 *Central Michigan* **CHIPPEWAS** 4-8, 2-6 MAC

MAC Championship: **Ohio over Toledo**

Games to Watch

AUG. 31
AKRON AT ILLINOIS
Akron is seeking another win over a Big Ten foe after stunning Northwestern last season. Illinois is 2–1 vs. the MAC in the last three years.

AUG. 31
BALL STATE VS. INDIANA
These two Indiana schools will meet at Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis. Ball State beat IU, 27–20, in 2011, the last time they played in Indy.

AUG. 31
TOLEDO AT KENTUCKY
The Rockets should be able to put points on the board against a rebuilding Wildcat D. The issue: Slowing down UK's power rushing attack.

SEPT. 7
WMU AT MICHIGAN STATE
Western Michigan is 0–10 all time against the big, bad Spartans, but the 2019 Broncos have the talent to make Sparty sweat.

SEPT. 7
OHIO AT PITTSBURGH
Pittsburgh should be on upset alert against a very good Ohio team that features one of the nation's most underrated QBs, Nathan Rourke.

SEPT. 14
KENT STATE AT AUBURN
It's a homecoming for Kent State quarterback Woody Barrett, who signed with the Tigers as a four-star prospect out of high school.

Koback: Toledo Athletics; Rourke: Ohio Athletics

2019 Unit Rankings

	QB	RB	WR/TE	OL	DL	LB	DB
AKRON	8	12	6	11	10	6	11
BALL STATE	9	5	2	4	11	2	7
BOWLING GREEN	3	6	10	10	9	11	12
BUFFALO	11	2	8	1	4	4	3
CENTRAL MICHIGAN	10	7	12	12	7	10	8
EASTERN MICHIGAN	7	8	7	9	8	12	1
KENT STATE	5	9	3	8	12	7	9
MIAMI	12	10	5	7	6	9	4
NORTHERN ILLINOIS	6	4	11	6	1	1	5
OHIO	1	11	9	5	3	5	2
TOLEDO	4	3	4	3	5	8	6
WESTERN MICHIGAN	2	1	1	2	2	3	10

Recruiting by School

1. Toledo
2. Western Michigan
3. Miami
4. Ohio
5. Central Michigan
6. Buffalo
7. Kent State
8. Northern Illinois
9. Akron
10. Eastern Michigan
11. Ball State
12. Bowling Green

Bryant Koback, Toledo

Nathan Rourke, Ohio

2019 Bowl Projections

Boca Raton Bowl: Ohio vs. USF

Dollar General Bowl: Toledo vs. Arkansas State

Camellia Bowl: Western Michigan vs. Troy

Bahamas Bowl: Northern Illinois vs. FAU

Famous Idaho Potato Bowl: Buffalo vs. San Diego State

MAC Coordinator Carousel

Akron: Offense
New: Tommy Zagorski
Old: A.J. Milwee

Akron: Defense
New: Matt Feeney
Old: Todd Stroud, Joe Tresey

Ball State: Defense
New: David Elson, Tyler Stockton
Old: David Elson

Bowling Green: Offense
New: Terry Malone
Old: Kevin Kilmer, Andy Padron

Bowling Green: Defense
New: Brian VanGorder
Old: Carl Pelini

Central Michigan: Offense
New: Charlie Frye
Old: Chris Ostrowsky

Central Michigan: Defense
New: Robb Akey
Old: Greg Colby

Ohio: Offense
New: Tim Albin
Old: Tim Albin, Scott Isphording

Ohio: Defense
New: Ron Collins, Pete Germano
Old: Jimmy Burrow, Ron Collins

Northern Illinois: Offense
New: Eric Eidsness
Old: Mike Uremovich

Northern Illinois: Defense
New: Derrick Jackson, Robert Wimberly
Old: Jeff Knowles

Western Michigan: Defense
New: Lou Espisito
Old: Tim Daoust, Lou Esposito

OCT. 5
OHIO AT BUFFALO
Buffalo won the MAC East title last season despite losing to OU 52–17 in the regular season. The Bulls would love to return the favor this fall.

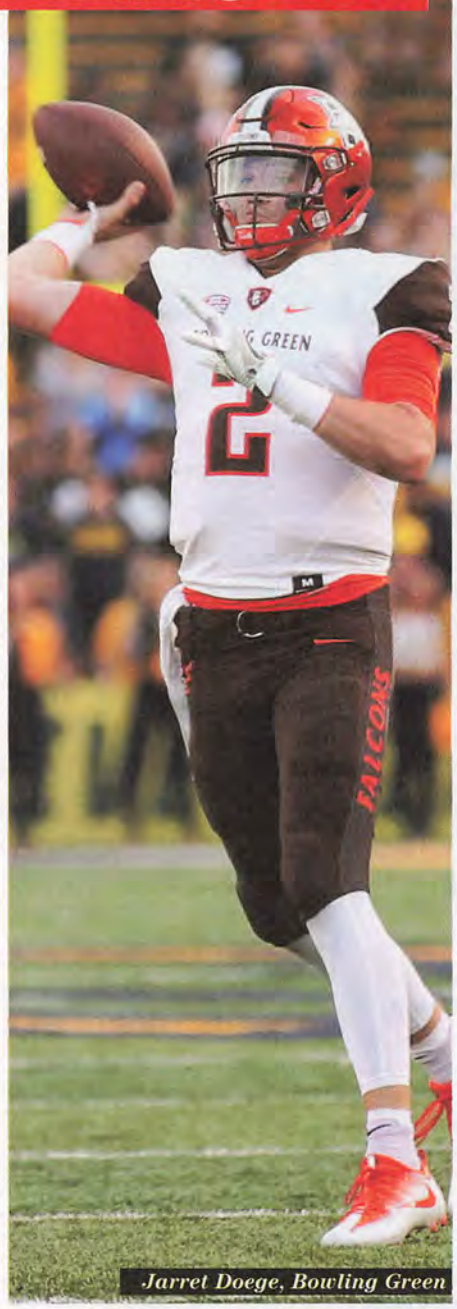
OCT. 5
WMU AT TOLEDO
On the same day Ohio visits Buffalo, the top two teams in the MAC West square off in Toledo. This is a pivotal game for both programs.

NOV. 2
BUFFALO AT EMU
Two of the nation's most underrated coaches — Buffalo's Lance Leipold and EMU's Chris Creighton — will match wits in Ypsilanti.

NOV. 12
WMU AT OHIO
It's a Tuesday night, so it must be time for some MACtion! Could this be a preview of the league title game?

NOV. 13
NIU AT TOLEDO
The defending MAC champs are under new leadership, as former NIU standout running back Thomas Hammock is the boss in DeKalb.

NOV. 26
WMU AT NIU
It's the regular-season finale for both teams, and the MAC West title could be on the line. What more can you ask for on a weekday in November?



Jarret Doege, Bowling Green

MAC Returning Leaders

Passing	ATT	COMP	PCT	YDS	TD	INT	AVG/G
Jarret Doege, Bowling Green	389	242	62.2	2,660	27	12	221.7
Kato Nelson, Akron	342	178	52.0	2,329	15	8	211.7
Woody Barrett, Kent State	390	229	58.7	2,339	11	9	194.9

Rushing	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD	LONG	AVG/G
LeVante Bellamy, Western Michigan	205	1,228	6.0	6	64	94.5
Tre Harbison, Northern Illinois	206	1,034	5.0	5	48	73.9
Jaret Patterson, Buffalo	183	1,013	5.5	14	64	72.4

Receiving	REC	YDS	AVG	TD	LONG	AVG/G
Riley Miller, Ball State	61	878	14.4	7	52	73.2
D'Wayne Eskridge, Western Michigan	38	776	20.4	3	84	70.5
Jack Sorenson, Miami	53	742	14.0	2	54	61.8

Tackles: Antonio Jones-Davis, Northern Illinois (130), John Lako, Akron (126)
Sacks: Ali Fayad, Western Michigan (6.5), Three players tied with 6.0
Interceptions: Alvin Davis Jr., Akron (4)

2018 MAC Standings

EAST	MAC	OVERALL	WEST	MAC	OVERALL
Buffalo	7-1	10-4	Northern Illinois	6-2	8-6
Miami	6-2	6-6	Eastern Michigan	5-3	7-6
Ohio	6-2	9-4	Toledo	5-3	7-6
Akron	2-6	4-8	Western Michigan	5-3	7-6
Bowling Green	2-6	3-9	Ball State	3-5	4-8
Kent State	1-7	2-10	Central Michigan	0-8	1-11

2018 Bowl Results

Camellia Bowl: Georgia Southern 23, Eastern Michigan 21

Bahamas Bowl: FIU 35, Toledo 32

Frisco Bowl: Ohio 27, San Diego State 0

Famous Idaho Potato Bowl: BYU 49, Western Michigan 18

Dollar General Bowl: Troy 42, Buffalo 32

Boca Raton Bowl: UAB 37, Northern Illinois 13

2018 MAC Team Stats & Rankings

Offense

	SCORING	RUSH	PASS	TOTAL
Akron	18.9 (11)	95.3 (12)	199.2 (10)	294.5 (11)
Ball State	24.2 (8)	155.7 (8)	252.9 (1)	408.6 (5)
Bowling Green	24.3 (7)	116.6 (11)	238.7 (2)	355.3 (9)
Buffalo	34.6 (3)	189.1 (4)	225.4 (6)	414.5 (4)
Central Michigan	15.0 (12)	120.2 (10)	134.5 (12)	254.7 (12)
Eastern Michigan	27.0 (6)	145.4 (9)	226.7 (5)	372.1 (7)
Kent State	23.9 (9)	171.7 (5)	211.9 (8)	383.6 (6)
Miami	28.1 (5)	159.8 (7)	212.3 (7)	372.1 (8)
Northern Illinois	20.1 (10)	166.9 (6)	155.4 (11)	322.3 (10)
Ohio	40.1 (2)	258.3 (1)	208.5 (9)	466.8 (1)
Toledo	40.4 (1)	215.9 (2)	227.9 (4)	443.8 (2)
Western Michigan	32.0 (4)	199.5 (3)	237.4 (3)	436.9 (3)

Defense

	SCORING	RUSH	PASS	TOTAL
Akron	27.2 (6)	197.0 (7)	191.1 (4)	388.1 (7)
Ball State	32.4 (9)	239.8 (11)	210.4 (7)	450.3 (11)
Bowling Green	40.0 (12)	280.5 (12)	167.6 (3)	448.1 (10)
Buffalo	25.9 (5)	161.1 (4)	194.2 (5)	355.4 (3)
Central Michigan	27.3 (7)	204.7 (9)	150.7 (2)	355.3 (2)
Eastern Michigan	22.1 (1)	203.5 (8)	150.2 (1)	353.8 (1)
Kent State	36.7 (11)	220.3 (10)	247.0 (9)	467.3 (12)
Miami	25.5 (4)	159.8 (3)	208.5 (6)	368.2 (5)
Northern Illinois	22.6 (2)	109.2 (1)	247.8 (10)	357.0 (4)
Ohio	24.6 (3)	137.1 (2)	253.8 (11)	390.9 (8)
Toledo	30.5 (8)	177.2 (6)	255.1 (12)	432.3 (9)
Western Michigan	34.5 (10)	165.9 (5)	220.8 (8)	386.6 (6)

ALL-MAC TEAM

First-Team Offense

QB	**Nathan Rourke**	6-2	208	Sr.	Ohio
RB	**LeVante Bellamy**	5-9	195	Sr.	Western Michigan
RB	**Jaret Patterson**	5-9	190	So.	Buffalo
AP	**Andrew Clair**	5-10	199	Jr.	Bowling Green
WR	**Riley Miller**	6-1	196	Sr.	Ball State
WR	**Jayden Reed**	6-0	170	So.	Western Michigan
TE	**Giovanni Ricci**	6-3	220	Sr.	Western Michigan
C	**Bryce Harris**	6-3	285	Sr.	Toledo
OL	**Luke Juriga**	6-4	295	Sr.	Western Michigan
OL	**Evin Ksiezarczyk**	6-6	315	Sr.	Buffalo
OL	**Steve Nielsen**	6-8	318	Sr.	Eastern Michigan
OL	**Paul Nosworthy**	6-4	288	Sr.	Buffalo

Jaret Patterson, Buffalo

Jack Heflin, Northern Illinois

First-Team Defense

DL	**Doug Costin**	6-2	295	Sr.	Miami
DL	**Ali Fayad**	6-2	240	Jr.	Western Michigan
DL	**Jack Heflin**	6-3	284	Jr.	Northern Illinois
DL	**Jamal Hines**	6-2	216	So.	Toledo
LB	**Antonio Jones-Davis**	5-11	226	Sr.	Northern Illinois
LB	**John Lako**	6-2	230	Sr.	Akron
LB	**Kyle Pugh**	6-0	235	Sr.	Northern Illinois
CB	**Kevin McGill**	6-2	193	Sr.	Eastern Michigan
CB	**Jamal Parker**	5-8	177	Sr.	Kent State
S	**Alvin Davis Jr.**	5-9	175	Sr.	Akron
S	**Javon Hagan**	6-1	210	Sr.	Ohio

First-Team Specialists

K	**Matthew Trickett**	6-0	191	So.	Kent State
P	**Michael Farkas**	6-4	195	Sr.	Ohio
KR	**Maurice Thomas**	5-11	180	Sr.	Miami
PR	**Jayden Reed**	6-0	170	So.	Western Michigan

SECOND-TEAM OFFENSE

QB	**Jon Wassink**	6-2	200	Sr.	Western Michigan
RB	**Tre Harbison**	5-11	227	Jr.	Northern Illinois
RB	**Bryant Koback**	6-0	193	So.	Toledo
AP	**Shakif Seymour**	5-11	218	Jr.	Toledo
WR	**Mike Carrigan**	5-9	168	Sr.	Kent State
WR	**Cameron Odom**	6-1	188	Jr.	Ohio
TE	**Reggie Gilliam**	6-0	235	Sr.	Toledo
C	**Danny Godlevske**	6-2	300	Jr.	Miami
OL	**Jack Kramer**	6-3	299	Sr.	Bowling Green
OL	**Danny Pinter**	6-4	295	Sr.	Ball State
OL	**Austen Pleasants**	6-8	306	Sr.	Ohio
OL	**Jordan Steckler**	6-5	306	Sr.	Northern Illinois

Jon Wassink
Western Michigan

Tre Harbison
Northern Illinois

Jack Sorenson
Miami

Ray Wilborn
Ball State

SECOND-TEAM DEFENSE

DL	**Nate Childress**	6-3	292	Sr.	Toledo
DL	**Will Evans**	6-2	250	Jr.	Ohio
DL	**Ralph Holley**	6-2	275	Jr.	Western Michigan
DL	**Taylor Riggins**	6-2	245	Jr.	Buffalo
LB	**James Patterson**	6-0	235	So.	Buffalo
LB	**Jacob White**	6-0	230	Sr.	Ball State
LB	**Ray Wilborn**	6-4	224	Sr.	Ball State
CB	**Marlin Brooks**	5-10	167	Jr.	Ohio
CB	**Jamal Hudson**	6-0	197	Jr.	Ohio
S	**Vince Calhoun**	5-11	200	Sr.	Eastern Michigan
S	**Mykelti Williams**	5-11	208	Sr.	Northern Illinois

SECOND-TEAM SPECIALISTS

K	**Louie Zervos**	5-9	179	Sr.	Ohio
P	**Derek Adams**	6-0	197	Jr.	Kent State
KR	**Kobe Lewis**	6-0	194	So.	Central Michigan
PR	**Danzel McKinley-Lewis**	5-10	183	Sr.	Toledo

THIRD-TEAM OFFENSE

QB	**Jarret Doege**	6-3	205	Jr.	Bowling Green
RB	**Kevin Marks**	6-0	200	So.	Buffalo
RB	**Jo-El Shaw**	6-1	230	Sr.	Kent State
AP	**Justin Hall**	5-9	176	Jr.	Ball State
WR	**Jack Sorenson**	6-0	194	Jr.	Miami
WR	**Andre Williams**	5-10	185	Jr.	Akron
TE	**Andrew Homer**	6-6	248	Jr.	Miami
C	**Steven Hayes**	6-4	319	Sr.	Ohio
OL	**Kayode Awosika**	6-5	300	Jr.	Buffalo
OL	**Cameron Bell**	6-8	345	Sr.	Toledo
OL	**Mike Caliendo**	6-4	300	Jr.	Western Michigan
OL	**Tommy Doyle**	6-8	315	Jr.	Miami

THIRD-TEAM DEFENSE

DL	**Sean Adesanya**	6-3	238	Sr.	Central Michigan
DL	**Malcolm Koonce**	6-3	245	Jr.	Buffalo
DL	**Weston Kramer**	6-1	292	Jr.	Northern Illinois
DL	**Amos Ogun-Semore**	6-5	235	So.	Ohio
LB	**Christian Albright**	6-2	233	Jr.	Ball State
LB	**Matt Bahr**	6-1	210	Sr.	Kent State
LB	**Drake Spears**	6-1	220	Sr.	Western Michigan
CB	**Zedrick Raymond**	6-0	180	Sr.	Miami
CB	**Aapri Washington**	5-9	175	So.	Buffalo
S	**Brody Hoying**	5-11	203	Sr.	Eastern Michigan
S	**Kahlil Robinson**	6-0	175	Sr.	Toledo

THIRD-TEAM SPECIALISTS

K	**Ryan Tice**	6-1	170	Sr.	Central Michigan
P	**Kyle Kramer**	6-3	215	Sr.	Miami
KR	**Jamal Parker**	5-8	177	Sr.	Kent State
PR	**Jeremiah Knight**	5-11	195	So.	Akron

BGSU Athletics; Buffalo Athletics; WMU Athletics; NIU Athletics; Miami Athletics; Ball State Athletics

Akron **Zips**

National Forecast: **121** • MAC East Prediction: **5** • Projected Record: **3-9, 2-6 MAC**

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	at Illinois
Sept.	7	UAB
Sept.	14	at Central Michigan
Sept.	21	Troy
Sept.	28	at Massachusetts
Oct.	12	Kent State
Oct.	19	Buffalo
Oct.	26	at Northern Illinois
Nov.	2	at Bowling Green
Nov.	12	Eastern Michigan
Nov.	20	at Miami (Ohio)
Nov.	26	Ohio

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 4-8, 2-6 MAC

Sept.	8	Morgan State	W	41-7
Sept.	15	at Northwestern	W	39-34
Sept.	22	at Iowa State	L	13-26
Oct.	6	Miami (Ohio)	L	17-41
Oct.	13	at Buffalo	L	6-24
Oct.	20	at Kent State (ot)	W	24-23
Oct.	27	Central Michigan	W	17-10
Nov.	1	Northern Illinois	L	26-36
Nov.	10	at Eastern Michigan	L	7-27
Nov.	17	Bowling Green	L	6-21
Nov.	23	at Ohio	L	28-49
Dec.	1	at South Carolina	L	3-28

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Corey Thomas, S, Pittsburgh, PA
2. Peter Hayes-Patrick, RB, Orlando, FL
3. Quevan Lawson, LB, Ashburn, GA
4. Daniel Lavelle, DE, Forsyth, GA
5. Adetutu Daranijo, S, Fort Lauderdale, FL
6. Zach Gibson, QB, Alpharetta, GA
7. Michael Scott, OLB, Tallahassee, FL*
8. Keyshawn Swanson, CB, Pensacola, FL
9. Owen Murphy, OT, Cleveland, OH
10. Tyson McDonald, S, Corona, CA

*junior college transfer

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	MAC	NATIONAL
Scoring	18.9 ppg	11	124
Rushing	95.3 ypg	12	126
Passing	199.2 ypg	10	96
Total	294.4 ypg	11	127
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**MAC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	27.2 ppg	6	67
Rushing	197.0 ypg	7	99
Passing	191.1 ypg	4	27
Total	388.1 ypg	7	61
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**MAC**	**NATIONAL**
-5	-0.42	10	104

STAT CORNER

14.8

Bend-don't-break: Akron allowed just 1.2 gains per game of 30-plus yards (seventh in FBS) but 14.8 of 10-plus yards (79th).

OFFENSE Akron was not able to keep pace offensively in the explosive MAC under coach Terry Bowden, who was fired after completing his seventh season in 2018. Bowden's Zips ranked 124th in the nation in scoring last year at 18.9 points per game and were 126th in rushing at 95.3 yards.

New coach Tom Arth will build his offense around junior quarterback Kato Nelson, who threw for 2,329 yards and 15 touchdowns with just eight interceptions last year. Nelson has a strong arm and is athletic enough to make something out of nothing with his feet when things break down. He was Akron's second-leading rusher last year, albeit with just 303 yards.

Arth is high on his receiving corps, which returns three of the top four performers from last year. Junior Andre Williams led the Zips with 46 catches for 649 yards and six touchdowns, while 6'4" Jonah Morris (26 catches, 381 yards) and 6'2" Nate Stewart (22 catches, 280 yards) were also solid contributors.

Akron returns the left side of its line in senior tackle Trevor Brown and sophomore guard Hunter Corne, along with junior center Bryce Petersen. Junior Brandon Council, a starter since 2017, should be ready to go after suffering a season-ending knee injury in Week 3 of 2018.

Running the football has been a glaring weakness for the Zips, who averaged just 2.9 yards per carry last season. Senior Deltron Sands, a transfer from Oregon State, saw the most action during spring drills but will be pushed by prized recruit Peter Hayes-Patrick, among others.

DEFENSE Defense kept Akron in most games last year, but the unit was not as dominant as anticipated following the MAC East Division championship season of 2017, and now eight starters are gone.

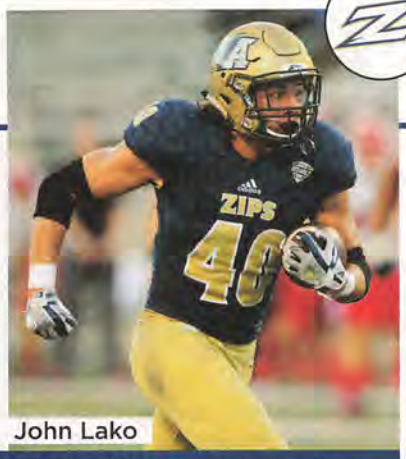
Senior free safety Alvin Davis Jr. will anchor this year's unit after earning first-team All-MAC honors last season, when he compiled 75 tackles and four interceptions. Two of those picks were returned for touchdowns in Akron's upset win at Northwestern.

Senior John Lako will lead the linebackers after earning third-team All-MAC recognition and leading the team with 126 tackles. Akron is looking for a breakout year from sophomore Bubba Arslanian, an undersized but fiercely competitive middle linebacker who will likely slide into a starting spot.

The Zips' only other returning starter on defense is senior Josh Ward, who compiled seven tackles for a loss and four sacks from his end spot last year. A player expected to emerge up front is 300-pound senior tackle Davon'te Jest.

SPECIALISTS The Zips must find both a punter and placekicker. They do have a proven return threat in sophomore Jeremiah Knight, who brought a punt back 70 yards for a TD last season.

FINAL ANALYSIS Arth became an FBS head coach at age 37 after four years leading Division III John Carroll and two seasons at FCS Chattanooga. His first Akron squad is filled with question marks. Nelson is a legitimate threat, but until the Zips are able to complement him with a consistent rushing attack, they'll struggle to score with the top-tier teams in the MAC. Akron's last two defenses have been loaded with experience, but that will not be the case this fall. Toss in the typical issues involved with a coaching change, and 2019 looks to be a transitional year in Akron.



John Lako

" I think the difference between them and the other teams that are starting over is that they have some nice pieces already there."

— An opposing MAC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (7)				Returning Starters in Bold
WR	9	**Jonah Morris (Jr.)**	82	Jeremiah Knight (So.)
WR	19	**Andre Williams (Jr.)**	14	Dustin Burkhart (Jr.)
WR	15	**Nate Stewart (Jr.)**	80	M.J. McGriff (Jr.)
LT	59	**Trevor Brown (Sr.)**	76	Rich Kallay (Sr.)
LG	72	**Hunter Corne (So.)**	78	Austin Sample (Jr.)
C	53	**Bryce Petersen (Jr.)**	74	Landon Forman (Jr.)
RG	68	Eric Bentley (Fr.)	78	Austin Sample (Jr.)
RT	56	Brandon Council (Jr.)	71	Shawn Muldowney II (So.)
TE	26	Maverick Wolfley (So.)	83	De'von Jones (Sr.)
QB	1	**Kato Nelson (Jr.)**	12	Alex Ramart (So.)
RB	4	Deltron Sands (Sr.)		Peter Hayes-Patrick (Fr.)
DEFENSE (3)				
DE	8	**Josh Ward (Sr.)**		Daniel Lavelle (Fr.)
DT	79	Andy Jean-Baptiste (Sr.)	12	DeAndre Brimage (Jr.)
NT	11	Davon'te Jest (Sr.)	67	Logan Hawkins (Fr.)
DE	16	Justin Sampson (Jr.)	44	Dylan Meeks (Jr.)
OLB	40	**John Lako (Sr.)**	34	DeMarcus Lloyd (Sr.)
MLB	27	Bubba Arslanian (So.)	22	Brandon Bischof (So.)
OLB	3	DeMarkus Glover (Jr.)	32	James King (Sr.)
CB	15	Jeffrey Lubin (So.)	46	Hugh Cade (Sr.)
CB	2	Shawn Featherstone (Sr.)	29	Jalen Hooks (So.)
FS	1	**Alvin Davis Jr. (Sr.)**	20	Zaire Jacobs (Jr.)
SS	19	Sammy Laster (So.)	21	Reggie Corner Jr. (Fr.)
SPECIAL TEAMS				
K	47	Jerry Fitschen (Jr.)	KR 82	Jeremiah Knight (So.)
P	47	Jerry Fitschen (Jr.)	PR 82	Jeremiah Knight (So.)

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Kato Nelson, 342-178-2,329-8 15 TDs
Rushing: Kato Nelson, 131 att., 303 yds., 1 TD
Receiving: Andre Williams, 46 rec., 649 yds., 6 TDs
Tackles: John Lako, 126
Sacks: Josh Ward, 4.0
Interceptions: Alvin Davis Jr., 4

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Tom Arth
Record at School: First Season
Career Record: 49-21 (6 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Tom Arth
Defensive Coordinator: Matt Feeney
Akron, OH • InfoCision Stadium (30,000)

Jeff Harwell

Bowling Green **Falcons**

National Forecast: **125** • MAC East Prediction: **6** • Projected Record: **2-10, 1-7 MAC**

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	29	Morgan State
Sept.	7	at Kansas State
Sept.	14	Louisiana Tech
Sept.	21	at Kent State
Oct.	5	at Notre Dame
Oct.	12	Toledo
Oct.	19	Central Michigan
Oct.	26	at Western Michigan
Nov.	2	Akron
Nov.	13	at Miami (Ohio)
Nov.	19	Ohio
Nov.	29	at Buffalo

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 3-9, 2-6 MAC

Sept.	1	at Oregon	L	24-58
Sept.	8	Maryland	L	14-45
Sept.	15	Eastern Kentucky	W	42-35
Sept.	22	Miami (Ohio)	L	23-38
Sept.	29	at Georgia Tech	L	17-63
Oct.	6	at Toledo	L	36-52
Oct.	13	Western Michigan	L	35-42
Oct.	20	at Ohio	L	14-49
Oct.	30	Kent State	L	28-35
Nov.	10	at Central Michigan	W	24-13
Nov.	17	at Akron	W	21-6
Nov.	23	Buffalo	L	14-44

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Brock Horne, LB, Romeo, MI
2. Anthony Johnson, DE, Cleveland, OH
3. Jordan Anderson, S, Detroit, MI
4. Tyrone Broden, WR, West Bloomfield, MI
5. Joey Carroll, TE, Toledo, OH
6. Dawan Martin, DE, Youngstown, OH
7. Davin Wilson, CB, Moreno Valley, CA
8. Darren Anders, LB, North Olmsted, OH
9. Luke Harmon, OT, Grand Rapids, MI
10. Grant Abbott, OG, Cleveland, OH

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	MAC	NATIONAL
Scoring	24.3 ppg	7	99
Rushing	116.6 ypg	11	118
Passing	238.7 ypg	2	60
Total	355.3 ypg	9	106
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**MAC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	40.0 ppg	12	125
Rushing	280.5 ypg	12	128
Passing	167.6 ypg	3	6
Total	448.1 ypg	10	106
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**MAC**	**NATIONAL**
-8	-0.67	12	115

STAT CORNER

13

BGSU stuffed opposing runners at or behind the line on just 13% of carries (129th in FBS) and allowed 4.0+ yards on 59% (128th).

OFFENSE The Falcons hired former Michigan quarterback and well-traveled assistant Scot Loeffler as their new head coach, and he comes in after most recently serving as offensive coordinator at Boston College. Loeffler's BC offense scored 40-plus points in four of its first five games last season, so he might bring the juice that the Falcons need.

Junior quarterback Jarret Doege is preparing for his third season as a starter after passing for 2,660 yards and 27 touchdowns in 2018, completing 242-of-389 passes with just 12 interceptions. Former Michigan offensive coordinator Terry Malone is filling that role in Bowling Green now and looks to put some spark in a rushing attack that managed just 116.6 yards per game a year ago. Junior Andrew Clair led the Falcons in 2018 with 702 yards rushing and five touchdowns, averaging 5.2 yards per carry. Backup quarterback Grant Loy brings speed with his 6'5", 226-pound frame and provides an interesting option in Wildcat formations.

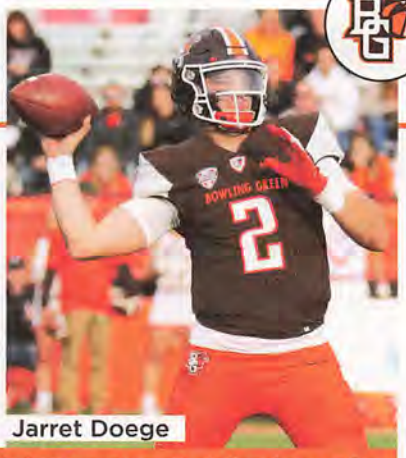
Junior Quintin Morris and Washington State transfer Isaiah Johnson-Mack are the top options at wide receiver. Johnson-Mack had 95 catches for 801 yards and six touchdowns in two seasons with the Cougars. Loeffler has an experienced line to build around, with seniors Lorenzo Taborn, Jack Kramer and Matt Tanner and junior Caleb Bright all returning with significant playing experience.

DEFENSE New defensive coordinator Brian VanGorder comes in with a lengthy résumé that includes stints at Georgia, Auburn, Notre Dame and Louisville, along with four seasons in the NFL. His Georgia defenses were among the best in the nation during his four years with the Bulldogs, but that won't be the expectation here — just significant improvement over last year, when Bowling Green surrendered 448.1 yards per game.

The Falcons were especially soft against the run, allowing 280.5 rushing yards per game. Junior linebacker Kholbe Coleman will have to lead the run-stopping effort after totaling 70 tackles last season. Safety Jerry McBride III has played in 32 games and leads a secondary that is thin on experience. Up front, senior David Konowalski has made 24 starts and should anchor a young unit after missing all of 2018 due to injury.

SPECIALISTS The placekicking work likely stays with junior Nate Needham, who hit 6-of-10 field goal attempts and connected on all 34 extra points. Junior Matt Naranjo won the punting job during the course of the season and averaged 41.2 yards per punt.

FINAL ANALYSIS Loeffler's first college head coaching job will require some major reconstruction. He took a solid step in a positive direction by surrounding himself with an experience-laden staff. Loeffler is a quarterback guru, and he has a good one to work with in Doege. He also has a veteran offensive line but will need to build a sound running game and have playmakers emerge at wide receiver. On defense, questions abound after that unit kept putting the Falcons in a position in which they had to score a bunch to challenge the opposition. Road games at Notre Dame and Kansas State will make the first portion of the schedule bumpy, and the MAC East Division — which is trending stronger — won't make things much easier the rest of the way.



Jarret Doege

"This just wasn't a disciplined or really effective football team under the last staff. The roster is a mess. No one jumps out at you."

— An opposing MAC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (7) — Returning Starters in Bold

WR	**80**	**Quintin Morris (Jr.)**	5	Noah Massey (So.)
WR	9	Isaiah Johnson-Mack (Jr.)	12	Jordan Wayne-Prather (Sr.)
WR	14	Jake Rogers (Fr.)	27	Rodell Rahmaan (Jr.)
LT	**74**	**Lorenzo Taborn (Sr.)**	**75**	**Matt Tanner (Sr.)**
LG	**55**	**Caleb Bright (Jr.)**	70	John O'Brian (Fr.)
C	**65**	**Jack Kramer (Sr.)**	71	Zach Dziengelewski (So.)
RG	73	Joe Ware (Jr.)	69	Tim Blair (Jr.)
RT	72	Derek Downs (So.)	63	Sam Neverov (So.)
TE	83	Austin Dorris (Sr.)	10	Presley Motes (Jr.)
QB	**2**	**Jarret Doege (Jr.)**	13	Grant Loy (Jr.)
RB	**1**	**Andrew Clair (Jr.)**	6	Ra'veion Hargrove (So.)

DEFENSE (3)

DE	8	David Konowalski (Sr.)	85	Jevon Henderson (So.)
DT	35	DeMontae Haigler (Jr.)	54	Nico Lautanen (Sr.)
NT	56	Walter Haire (So.)	49	Emmanuel Sadala (Fr.)
DE	**17**	**Karl Brooks (So.)**	20	Jordan Murphy (So.)
OLB	18	Evan Brown (So.)	15	Eldridge Salguero (Sr.)
MLB	**55**	**Kholbe Coleman (Jr.)**	1	Brandon Perce (Sr.)
OLB	33	Jerry Roberts (Fr.)	24	Charles Lamar (Sr.)
CB	25	Ty Redding (Jr.)	37	Melvin Jackson (Sr.)
CB	2	Caleb Biggers (So.)	27	Jai Nunn-Liddell (Jr.)
FS	**7**	**Jerry McBride III (Sr.)**	21	Antonyo Sotolongo (Sr.)
SS	13	Jamari Bozeman (Sr.)	11	Cedric Mitchell (So.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	12	Nate Needham (Jr.)	**KR**	14	Jake Rogers (Fr.)
P	96	Matt Naranjo (Jr.)	**PR**	12	Jordan Wayne-Prather (Sr.)

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Jarret Doege, 389-242-2,660-12, 27 TDs
Rushing: Andrew Clair, 135 att., 702 yds., 5 TDs
Receiving: Quintin Morris, 42 rec., 516 yds., 7 TDs
Tackles: Jerry McBride III, 106
Sacks: Karl Brooks, 3.5
Interceptions: None

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Scot Loeffler
Record at School: First Season
Career Record: First Season
Offensive Coordinator: Terry Malone
Defensive Coordinator: Brian VanGorder
Bowling Green, OH • Doyt Perry Stadium (24,000)

BGSU Athletics

Buffalo **Bulls**

National Forecast: **98** • MAC East Prediction: **2** • Projected Record: **6-6, 5-3 MAC**

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	29	Robert Morris
Sept.	7	at Penn State
Sept.	14	at Liberty
Sept.	21	Temple
Sept.	28	at Miami (Ohio)
Oct.	5	Ohio
Oct.	19	at Akron
Oct.	26	Central Michigan
Nov.	2	at Eastern Michigan
Nov.	14	at Kent State
Nov.	20	Toledo
Nov.	29	Bowling Green

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 10-4, 7-1 MAC

Sept.	1	Delaware State	W	48-10
Sept.	8	at Temple	W	36-29
Sept.	15	Eastern Michigan	W	35-28
Sept.	22	at Rutgers	W	42-13
Sept.	29	Army	L	13-42
Oct.	6	at Central Michigan	W	34-24
Oct.	13	Akron	W	24-6
Oct.	20	at Toledo	W	31-17
Oct.	30	Miami (Ohio)	W	51-42
Nov.	6	Kent State	W	48-14
Nov.	14	at Ohio	L	17-52
Nov.	23	at Bowling Green	W	44-14
Nov.	30	vs. Northern Illinois #	L	29-30
Dec.	22	vs. Troy %	L	32-42

#Detroit %Dollar General Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Trevor Solomon-Wilson, WR, Tallahassee, FL
2. Tyrece Woods, DT, Detroit, MI
3. Rich Miller, LB, Detroit, MI
4. Kyler Laing, DE, Tallahassee, FL
5. Caleb Tate, LB, Tampa, FL
6. Trevor Byczynski, QB, Cleveland, OH
7. Javien Cuff, WR, Vero Beach, FL
8. Tyler Stephens, TE, Newton Falls, OH
9. Daniel Lee, WR, Breaux Bridge, LA*
10. Marcus Fuqua, S, Southfield, MI

*junior college transfer

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	MAC	NATIONAL
Scoring	34.6 ppg	3	26
Rushing	189.1 ypg	4	47
Passing	225.4 ypg	6	74
Total	414.5 ypg	4	56
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**MAC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	25.9 ppg	5	57
Rushing	161.1 ypg	4	62
Passing	194.2 ypg	5	31
Total	355.4 ypg	3	37
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**MAC**	**NATIONAL**
+4	+0.29	4	44

STAT CORNER

+1.1

UB's defense was far more efficient in 2018, allowing 0.8 fewer yards per play on first down and 1.1 more yards to go on third.

OFFENSE Buffalo set a program record and ranked 26th nationally in scoring (34.6 ppg) in 2018 while putting more of its offense in the hands of two freshmen runners. MAC Freshman of the Year Jaret Patterson became the first Buffalo rookie to rush for over 1,000 yards, and he scored 14 touchdowns. Kevin Marks kept pace with 845 and 13 TDs as a redshirt freshman. They will resume running behind an offensive line that returns four starters, including second-team All-MAC left tackle Evin Ksiezarczyk.

A strong ground game will be necessary as Buffalo lacks a proven passer to replace quarterback Tyree Jackson, the MAC's Offensive Player of the Year. Sophomore Kyle Vantrease is the most experienced option and front-runner to start the season. He started one game as a true freshman in 2017 and redshirted last season. Vantrease will compete with Dominic Johnson and redshirt freshman Matt Myers, who are both better runners. Recruit Trevor Byczynski could eventually be the starter, but not right away.

Buffalo's top returning pass catchers, Charlie Jones and Antonio Nunn, combined for 541 yards and four touchdowns last season. The Bulls knew they would need to replace star wideout Anthony Johnson but weren't expecting the transfers of All-MAC selections K.J. Osborn (Miami, Fla.) and tight end Tyler Mabry (Maryland). Two 6'6" targets will try to fill the void. Julien Bourassa returns from injury, and tight end Zac Lefebvre is moving into a receiver role.

DEFENSE The Bulls bring back lots of experience on defense but must replace their leaders in tackles, sacks and interceptions. Pass rushers Taylor Riggins (5.0 sacks in '18), Malcolm Koonce and Ledarius Mack flashed potential as reserves and are ready for expanded roles. Interior linemen Chibueze Onwuka, DeShondrick Foxworth and the 6'4", 340-pound Eddie Wilson all have starting experience.

James Patterson, twin brother of the Bulls running back — and the higher-rated recruit — will likely take over for tackle machine Khalil Hodge at middle linebacker. Patterson started every game outside as a true freshman, leading the team with nine tackles for a loss and four forced fumbles. The tandem of 6'3" Kadofi Wright and 6'2" Tim Terry shores up a need for rangy outside backers. Matt Otwinowski is a smart, experienced backup.

Safety Joey Banks has All-MAC potential if he can stay healthy. Tyrone Hill was a capable starter when Banks was hurt. Cornerback Devon Russell was leading the Bulls in pass break-ups before getting injured in the fourth game last season. Aapri Washington started six games at corner.

SPECIALISTS Punter Evan Finegan set a school record with a 41.8-yard average as a freshman. Sophomore Alex McNulty made one start and missed a costly extra point in the MAC Championship Game. Jones averaged 19.3 yards on kickoff returns.

FINAL ANALYSIS In his fourth year, Lance Leipold led Buffalo to its first 10-win campaign, second MAC East title and third bowl bid in the 20 seasons since the program returned to Division I. Having won six Division III national championships at Wisconsin-Whitewater, Leipold knows how to sustain success. But the departures on offense and a more challenging nonconference schedule will make it difficult to reach last year's peak.

Jaret Patterson

"This is the team that's going to outscheme you. We could see it on film afterwards. This is just a really well-coached team."

— An opposing MAC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (5) — Returning Starters in Bold

WR	1	Antonio Nunn (Jr.)	13	Tito Overton (Jr.)
WR	17	Charlie Jones (So.)	86	LeMaro Smith (Fr.)
WR	89	Zac Lefebvre (Jr.)	14	Jelani Foster (Fr.)
LT	**67**	**Evan Ksiezarczyk (Sr.)**	59	Jake Fuzak (So.)
LG	**72**	**Paul Nosworthy (Jr.)**	75	Trey Dreouen (Sr.)
C	62	Mike Novitsky (Fr.)	79	Jack Klenk (Jr.)
RG	66	Jacob Gall (So.)	**65**	**Tomas Jack-Kurdyla (Sr.)**
RT	**73**	**Kayode Awosika (Jr.)**	69	Gabe Wallace (So.)
TE	85	Julian Bourassa (Jr.)	44	Jake Molinich (Jr.)
QB	7	Kyle Vantrease (So.)	9	Dominic Johnson (Jr.)
RB	**26**	**Jaret Patterson (So.)**	5	Kevin Marks (So.)

DEFENSE (2)

DE	50	Malcolm Koonce (Jr.)	52	Ledarius Mack (Sr.)
DT	93	Chibueze Onwuka (Jr.)	92	Ronald McGee (So.)
DT	91	Eddie Wilson (So.)	54	DeShondrick Foxworth (Sr.)
DE	49	Taylor Riggins (Jr.)	99	Frendy Darelus (Fr.)
OLB	31	Kadofi Wright (So.)	34	Ja'Varius Harrison (So.)
MLB	**20**	**James Patterson (So.)**	42	Matt Otwinowski (Sr.)
OLB	5	Tim Terry (So.)	21	Justin Mulbah (Jr.)
CB	3	Aapri Washington (So.)	18	Roy Baker (Jr.)
CB	12	Devon Russell (Sr.)	30	Wankeith Akin Jr. (So.)
S	**22**	**Joey Banks (Sr.)**	28	Dev Lamour (Sr.)
S	33	Tyrone Hill (Jr.)	2	Ashton White (Sr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	11	Alex McNulty (So.)	**KR**	17	Charlie Jones (So.)
P	40	Evan Finegan (So.)	**PR**	10	Isaiah King (So.)

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Kyle Vantrease, 9-4-20-0, 0 TDs
Rushing: Jaret Patterson, 183 att., 1,013 yds., 14 TDs
Receiving: Charlie Jones: 18 rec., 395 yds., 3 TDs
Tackles: James Patterson, 77
Sacks: Taylor Riggins, 5.0
Interceptions: Aapri Washington, 2

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Lance Leipold
Record at School: 23-27 (4 years)
Career Record: 132-33 (12 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Andy Kotelnicki
Defensive Coordinator: Brian Borland
Buffalo, NY • UB Stadium (30,270)

Buffalo Athletics

Kent State **Golden Flashes**

National Forecast: **115** • MAC East Prediction: **4** • Projected Record: **4-8, 3-5 MAC**

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	29	at Arizona State
Sept.	7	Kennesaw State
Sept.	14	at Auburn
Sept.	21	Bowling Green
Oct.	5	at Wisconsin
Oct.	12	at Akron
Oct.	19	at Ohio
Oct.	26	Miami (Ohio)
Nov.	5	at Toledo
Nov.	14	Buffalo
Nov.	23	Ball State
Nov.	29	at Eastern Michigan

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 2-10, 1-7 MAC

Sept.	1	at Illinois	L	24-31
Sept.	8	Howard	W	54-14
Sept.	15	at Penn State	L	10-63
Sept.	22	at Ole Miss	L	17-38
Sept.	29	at Ball State	L	24-52
Oct.	6	Ohio	L	26-27
Oct.	13	at Miami (Ohio)	L	6-31
Oct.	20	Akron (ot)	L	23-24
Oct.	30	at Bowling Green	W	35-28
Nov.	6	at Buffalo	L	14-48
Nov.	15	Toledo	L	34-56
Nov.	23	Eastern Michigan	L	20-28

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Joachim Bangda, RB, Washington, DC
2. Mario Nunez, CB, Kennesaw, GA
3. Mike McNicholas, OG, Lombard, IL
4. Collin Schlee, QB, Ijamsville, MD
5. Dean Clark, S, Massillon, OH
6. Glenn Hayes, S, Lithonia, GA
7. Prince Okituama, LB, Newark, NJ
8. Sekou Diaby, DE, Hillside, NJ*
9. Jabbar Price, DE, Youngstown, OH*
10. Dante Cephas, WR, Pittsburgh, PA

*junior college transfer

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	MAC	NATIONAL
Scoring	23.9 ppg	9	104
Rushing	171.7 ypg	5	61
Passing	211.9 ypg	8	85
Total	383.6 ypg	6	83
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**MAC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	36.7 ppg	11	116
Rushing	220.3 ypg	10	114
Passing	247.0 ypg	9	93
Total	467.3 ypg	12	117
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**MAC**	**NATIONAL**
-1	-0.08	8	73

STAT CORNER

60.6

In 2017, Kent State games averaged a combined 47.8 points. In 2018, 60.6. If nothing else, the Flashes were more fun last fall.

OFFENSE The Golden Flashes' offensive numbers improved across the board in Year 1 under Sean Lewis, but that's not saying much since they'd been near the very bottom in the nation in scoring and total yards in each of the four previous seasons. Kent State did establish a quarterback to run Lewis' up-tempo offense in 6'2", 236-pound dual-threat junior Woody Barrett, who threw for 2,339 yards and rushed for 503 with 18 total touchdowns in 2018. Like the team as a whole, Barrett was dazzling at times but inconsistent overall (11 TD passes, nine interceptions).

Barrett has a bevy of proven receivers, headed by senior Mike Carrigan, who caught 45 passes and led the squad with 597 yards and five TDs.

The Flashes averaged a respectable 4.2 yards per carry last fall but are looking for more behind a front that should be much improved with the return of junior right tackle Adam Gregoire from a knee injury that shelved him all of last season.

The running back corps features 230-pound Jo-El Shaw, who emerged as the feature back at the end of last season. Another potential threat is speedy 186-pound sophomore Xavier Williams, a change-of-pace weapon out of the backfield.

DEFENSE Kent State's defense struggled with consistency while undergoing a transformation in Year 1 as well, switching from a passive 4-3 to an attacking 3-4. The Flashes gave up a league-high 36.8 points per game against conference opponents.

No established stars return, although senior Jamal Parker is one of the league's better corners. Senior outside linebacker Nick Faulkner is a breakout candidate. Faulkner was solid in 2018 after recovering from knee surgery but is now completely healthy and capable of creating havoc off the edge.

The secondary is experienced with Parker, steady junior safety Keith Sherald, junior cornerback Elvis Hines and senior safety Akeam Peters, who stood out during spring drills. Kent State also hopes to have talented Maryland transfer Qwuantrezz Knight in the mix at safety, but he's still waiting for the NCAA to decide on his eligibility status.

The Flashes received a pleasant surprise when the NCAA granted linebacker Matt Bahr a sixth year of eligibility. Bahr is an undersized yet heady player who leads the defense and special teams units.

Stopping the run is the top priority defensively according to Lewis, and that starts in the trenches. Nose tackle Dominic Hill and end Theo Majette lead a line that's lacking a game-changer.

SPECIALISTS The Flashes feature one of the nation's top punters in junior Derek Adams, who missed most of last season due to a hip injury suffered just before the opener. Sophomore placekicker Matthew Trickett also returns after hitting 13-of-14 field goals from inside 40 yards last year.

FINAL ANALYSIS Lewis has drastically improved the energy and attitude of the program since taking over in December 2017. His first two recruiting classes have been ranked in the upper third of the MAC, and his first squad had its moments. With Barrett established at quarterback and improvement at every position around him, the Flashes should finally be able to generate enough offense to compete in a high-scoring conference.

Woody Barrett

"They're changing how they recruit, and it's really showing. They're bringing in guys at a level they've never really had."

— An opposing MAC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (8)				Returning Starters in Bold
WR	87	**Mike Carrigan (Sr.)**	10	Kavious Price (Sr.)
WR	89	**Antwan Dixon (Jr.)**	27	Isaac Vance (So.)
WR	23	**Isaiah McKoy (So.)**	83	Lon'kevious McFadden (Fr.)
LT	64	Bryce Gibbs (Sr.)	**72**	**Jamil Viaud (Sr.)**
LG	**55**	**Julian Sams (So.)**	50	Adam Tourville (Jr.)
C	**74**	**Nate Warnock (Sr.)**	62	Mike Morris (Fr.)
RG	**67**	**Nathan Monnin (Jr.)**	69	Sam Allan (So.)
RT	75	Adam Gregoire (Jr.)	77	Daniel Johnson (Fr.)
TE	88	Mark Williams (Fr.)	45	Adam Dulka (Jr.)
QB	**15**	**Woody Barrett (Jr.)**	14	Dustin Crum (Jr.)
RB	33	Jo-El Shaw (Sr.)	2	Will Matthews (Sr.)
DEFENSE (5)				
DE	53	Alex Hoag (Sr.)	41	Jabbar Price (Jr.)
DT	98	Dominic Hill (Sr.)	93	Matt Bell (Jr.)
DE	92	Theo Majette (Sr.)	97	Zayin West (So.)
OLB	**1**	**Nick Faulkner (Sr.)**	42	Jordan Felice (So.)
ILB	37	Cepeda Phillips (Jr.)	28	Mandela Lawrence-Burke (Jr.)
ILB	**6**	**Matt Bahr (Sr.)**	19	A.J. Musolino (So.)
OLB	34	Kesean Gamble (Jr.)	44	Matt Harmon (Fr.)
CB	**7**	**Jamal Parker (Sr.)**	21	Montre Miller (Fr.)
CB	**8**	**Elvis Hines (Jr.)**	39	Miles Daniels (Jr.)
S	31	Akeam Peters (Sr.)	24	Qwuantrezz Knight (Jr.)
S	**15**	**Keith Sherald (Jr.)**	38	Jae'Vante Ray (Sr.)
SPECIAL TEAMS				
K	82	Matthew Trickett (So.)	**KR** 7	Jamal Parker (Sr.)
P	96	Derek Adams (Jr.)	**PR** 10	Kavious Price (Sr.)

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Woody Barrett, 390-229-2,339-9, 11 TDs
Rushing: Jo-El Shaw, 138 att., 657 yds., 7 TDs
Receiving: Mike Carrigan, 45 rec., 597 yds., 5 TDs
Tackles: Keith Sherald, 91
Sacks: Theo Majette, 4.5
Interceptions: Jamal Parker, 2

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Sean Lewis
Record at School: 2-10 (1 year)
Career Record: 2-10 (1 year)
Offensive Coordinator: Andrew Sowder
Defensive Coordinator: Tom Kaufman
Kent, OH • Dix Stadium (25,319)

Kent State Athletics

Miami **RedHawks**

National Forecast: **105** • MAC East Prediction: **3** • Projected Record: **5-7, 4-4 MAC**

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	at Iowa
Sept.	7	Tennessee Tech
Sept.	14	at Cincinnati
Sept.	21	at Ohio State
Sept.	28	Buffalo
Oct.	12	at Western Michigan
Oct.	19	Northern Illinois
Oct.	26	at Kent State
Nov.	6	at Ohio
Nov.	13	Bowling Green
Nov.	20	Akron
Nov.	29	at Ball State

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 6-6, 6-2 MAC

Sept.	1	Marshall	L	28-35
Sept.	8	Cincinnati #	L	0-21
Sept.	15	at Minnesota	L	3-26
Sept.	22	at Bowling Green	W	38-23
Sept.	29	Western Michigan	L	39-40
Oct.	6	at Akron	W	41-17
Oct.	13	Kent State	W	31-6
Oct.	20	at Army (ot)	L	30-31
Oct.	30	at Buffalo	L	42-51
Nov.	7	Ohio	W	30-28
Nov.	14	at Northern Illinois	W	13-7
Nov.	20	Ball State	W	42-21

#Paul Brown Stadium

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Brett Gabbert, QB, St. Louis, MO
2. Sam Vaughan, OT, Versailles, KY
3. Austin Robinson, WR, Cornelius, NC
4. Lonnie Phelps, DE, Cincinnati, OH
5. Deland McCullough II, DB, Leawood, KS
6. Nick Manson, WR, Jonesboro, GA
7. Julius Wood, S, Columbus, OH
8. Caleb Shaffer, OG, Carmel, IN
9. Jack Coldiron, TE, Alexandria, KY
10. Anthony Collier, DE, Nashville, TN

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	MAC	NATIONAL
Scoring	28.1 ppg	5	75
Rushing	159.8 ypg	7	77
Passing	212.3 ypg	7	84
Total	372.0 ypg	8	94
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**MAC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	25.5 ppg	4	50
Rushing	159.7 ypg	3	58
Passing	208.5 ypg	6	45
Total	368.2 ypg	5	44
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**MAC**	**NATIONAL**
+6	+0.50	3	27

STAT CORNER

2-3

Miami was 2-3 in one-possession games in 2018 — not great, but far better than the 5-18 record the RedHawks had from 2014-17.

OFFENSE The first month of the season will be interesting for a Miami offense that lost three of its top four rushers and the quarterbacks who combined to throw all of the team's passes. Alex Malzone, a former Michigan Wolverine, would've been the likely starter as a senior, but he elected to transfer. Freshman A.J. Mayer and sophomore Jackson Williamson are the front-runners, but incoming freshman Brett Gabbert — the brother of NFL quarterback Blaine — could force himself into the picture.

Senior Maurice Thomas is an accomplished kick returner, but he also has the most experience among the running backs and is another year removed from the knee injury that cost him all but three games of the 2017 season. Davion Johnson averaged 5.0 yards per carry in limited action last season. Speedy junior Jaylon Bester, like the graduated Kenny Young, is a dual threat as a runner and a receiver.

Whoever wins the quarterback job will have plenty of talented wide receivers to work with, led by junior Jack Sorenson and senior Luke Mayock, who ranked second among RedHawk wideouts in catches last season. Junior tight end Andrew Homer also emerged last season as a reliable target.

Juniors Danny Godlevske and Tommy Doyle and senior Jarrett LaRubbio give Miami plenty of experience on the offensive line.

DEFENSE Linebacker Brad Koenig graduated after a spectacular senior season that included 101 tackles — 43 more than any other player on the team. The second-leading tackler was safety Mike Brown, who could emerge as the top player on the defense in 2019. He displayed a nose for the football in his first season as a starter.

Senior tackle Doug Costin, a second-team all-conference pick, started every game, and junior end Ben Kimpler started the last nine. Linebacker Myles Reid also picked up valuable experience with starts in the last five games and six of the last seven.

The secondary includes senior cornerback Zedrick Raymond, who started all 12 games, along with Travion Banks, another senior corner, who started the last seven games.

SPECIALISTS Placekicker Samuel Sloman, punter Kyle Kramer and long snapper Evan Crabtree all are back for their third season as starters. Sloman was 10-of-13 on field goals and added 42 touchbacks while handling kickoffs in 2018. Kramer earned third-team all-conference honors with an average of 41.9 yards per punt and 30 kicks inside the 20-yard line. Thomas was a first-team all-conference returner.

FINAL ANALYSIS Sixth-year coach Chuck Martin takes issue with the perception that Miami will be hurting with the loss of so many starters. Those departed players were part of a group that's gone 16–6 over the last 22 MAC games, but the run hasn't led to any division championships, which frustrates Miami fans used to winning.

The RedHawks return five players on offense and seven on defense who were starting by the end of last season, and Martin is hoping that experience will help Miami weather a challenging non-conference schedule. While the RedHawks have done well in the MAC, they are 2–19 outside of the conference in Martin's tenure.

Jack Sorenson

"That scheme is really good, and they execute it well. But they get really tight in close games, like they're overthinking it."

— An opposing MAC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

Jeff Sabo

OFFENSE (4)				Returning Starters in Bold
WR	13	Jack Sorenson (Jr.)	83	Jalen Walker (So.)
WR	11	Dominique Robinson (Jr.)	8	Cam Blakely (Fr.)
WR	**86**	**Luke Mayock (Sr.)**	88	Mitchell Lewis (So.)
LT	77	Matt Skibinski (Sr.)	68	Donovan White (Jr.)
LG	**75**	**Jarrett LaRubbio (Sr.)**	55	Andrew Todd (Fr.)
C	**51**	**Danny Godlevske (Jr.)**	74	Jack Schroer (Sr.)
RG	65	Pete Nank (So.)	64	David Redding (So.)
RT	**54**	**Tommy Doyle (Jr.)**	57	Bennett Clark (Fr.)
TE	46	Andrew Homer (Jr.)	80	Quentin Hardy (Sr.)
QB	2	Jackson Williamson (So.)	10	A.J. Mayer (Fr.)
RB	23	Davion Johnson (So.)	18	Jaylon Bester (Jr.)
DEFENSE (5)				
DE	82	Kameron Butler (So.)	52	Cam Turner (Jr.)
DT	**58**	**Doug Costin (Sr.)**	91	Andrew Sharp (Fr.)
DT	34	Isaac Hampton (So.)	11	Logan Speyer (So.)
DE	**95**	**Ben Kimpler (Jr.)**	90	Dean Lemon (Sr.)
OLB	17	Myles Reid (Sr.)	39	Nigel Adams (Jr.)
MLB	35	Ryan McWood (Jr.)	19	Dallas Fields (Fr.)
CB	**14**	**Zedrick Raymond (Sr.)**	18	Cedric Boswell (Jr.)
CB	**6**	**Travion Banks (Sr.)**	5	Manny Rugamba (Jr.)
NB	49	Bart Baratti (Sr.)	27	Kobe Burse (Sr.)
S	**3**	**Mike Brown (Jr.)**	22	Cecil Singleton (Fr.)
S	21	Sterling Weatherford (So.)	28	Jeremiah Josephs (Fr.)
SPECIAL TEAMS				
K	79	Samuel Sloman (Sr.)	KR 31	Maurice Thomas (Sr.)
P	9	Kyle Kramer (Sr.)	PR 13	Jack Sorenson (Jr.)

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: None
Rushing: Maurice Thomas, 61 att., 233 yds., 1 TD
Receiving: Jack Sorenson, 53 rec., 742 yds., 2 TDs
Tackles: Mike Brown, 58
Sacks: Doug Costin, 6.0
Interceptions: 5 players tied with 1

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Chuck Martin
Record at School: 22-39 (5 years)
Career Record: 96-46 (11 years)
Offensive Coordinator: George Barnett, Eric Koehler
Defensive Coordinators: John Hauser, Spence Nowinsky
Oxford, OH • Yager Stadium (24,286)

Ohio **Bobcats**

National Forecast: **72** • MAC East Prediction: **1** • Projected Record: **9-4, 6-2 MAC**

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	Rhode Island
Sept.	7	at Pittsburgh
Sept.	14	at Marshall
Sept.	21	Louisiana
Oct.	5	at Buffalo
Oct.	12	Northern Illinois
Oct.	19	Kent State
Oct.	26	at Ball State
Nov.	6	Miami (Ohio)
Nov.	12	Western Michigan
Nov.	19	at Bowling Green
Nov.	26	at Akron

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 9-4, 6-2 MAC

Sept.	1	Howard	W	38-32
Sept.	15	Virginia #	L	31-45
Sept.	22	at Cincinnati	L	30-34
Sept.	29	Massachusetts	W	58-42
Oct.	6	at Kent State	W	27-26
Oct.	13	at Northern Illinois	L	21-24
Oct.	20	Bowling Green	W	49-14
Oct.	25	Ball State	W	52-14
Nov.	1	at Western Michigan	W	59-14
Nov.	7	at Miami (Ohio)	L	28-30
Nov.	14	Buffalo	W	52-17
Nov.	23	Akron	W	49-28
Dec.	19	vs. San Diego St. %	W	27-0

#Nashville %Frisco Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Denzel Daxon, DT, Nassau, Bahamas
2. Tyler Foster, TE, Pickerington, OH
3. Cannon Blauser, OLB, Hilliard, OH
4. Jay Amburgey, OT, Reynoldsburg, OH
5. Walter Wilbon III, RB, Tampa, FL
6. Jett Elad, CBS Cleveland, OH
7. Thomas Aronokhale, OG, Innsbruck, Austria
8. Kurtis Rourke, QB, Binbrook, ON
9. Gary Hoover, OT, Neptune, NJ*
10. Kyle Kelly, OLB, Newport, KY

*junior college transfer

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	MAC	NATIONAL
Scoring	40.1 ppg	2	12
Rushing	258.3 ypg	1	9
Passing	208.5 ypg	9	91
Total	466.8 ypg	1	16
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**MAC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	24.6 ppg	3	44
Rushing	137.1 ypg	2	33
Passing	253.8 ypg	11	99
Total	390.9 ypg	8	64
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**MAC**	**NATIONAL**
+13	+1.00	1	5

STAT CORNER

7.6

Ohio was frequently ahead of schedule: The Bobcats averaged 7.6 yards per play on first down, fourth in FBS and first in the MAC.

Ohio Athletics

OFFENSE The Bobcats could take a step back on offense after graduating seven offensive starters, including some of the program's best in running back A.J. Ouellette and wide receiver Papi White. Ohio returns no back who had more than 20 carries a season ago and only two wideouts (Cameron Odom and Isiah Cox) who had more than five receptions. Ohio will not be averaging 40.1 points per game as it did last season, nor leading the MAC in total offense.

But Ohio does have QB Nathan Rourke, and that's a great place to start. The senior dual threat has been an excellent operator in the Bobcats' option-based offense. Rourke has more than 6,000 yards of total offense over two seasons, is the best running threat at the position in the league, and has accounted for 77 total touchdowns in 26 career games.

Ohio will still be a run-first team. The offensive line has three new starters but will have a starting five that has four players with starting experience and three fifth-year seniors. There will be an ongoing battle at running back all season with speedy sophomore Julian Ross, bowling-ball redshirt freshman O'Shaan Allison, junior college transfer Demontre Tuggle and freshman phenom Walter Wilbon III all getting a crack to be the featured back.

DEFENSE Ohio engineered an impressive midseason turnaround in 2018. The Bobcats allowed 31 points per game and 6.7 yards per play through the first seven games last year, but over the last five, those numbers dipped to just 17.2 and 5.2. And many of the reasons for that turnaround return.

The secondary should be a strength with senior Javon Hagan returning as one of the best safeties in the MAC. Junior cornerbacks Jamal Hudson and Marlin Brooks turned the proverbial corner in the middle of 2018, and now they return with confidence and experience. The same could be said of junior middle linebacker Jared Dorsa, who attacked more than he reacted down the stretch in 2018.

Ohio's mediocre pass rush — which produced only 25 sacks last season — should improve with the return of every defensive end on the roster, including starters Will Evans and Amos Ogun-Semore.

Ohio has a new defensive coordinator for the first time in 15 years as long-time DC Jimmy Burrow retired to watch his son, Joe, play QB at LSU this season. Head coach Frank Solich promoted Ron Collins, who has been on the staff for eight years and has previous play-calling experience at Boise State and Colorado.

SPECIALISTS Placekicker Louie Zervos and punter Michael Farkas are entering their fourth and final season at Ohio. The duo has been among the MAC's best in each of the last three seasons, and there's no reason to believe things will be different in 2019.

FINAL ANALYSIS Despite a lack of returning offensive weapons, the Bobcats are positioned as well as any team in the MAC East. Ohio returns the league's best quarterback in Rourke, will have a veteran defense to start the year and will again be helped rather than hurt by special teams play. If the young talent at the skill positions develops quickly, and the defense plays at the level it did to end 2018, the Bobcats should be on pace for at least eight wins and another run at a division title. But with the offense due for a step back, Ohio's margin for error will be slimmer than a year ago.

Nathan Rourke

"You better know what you're doing on defense when you play these guys. They will run the ball over and over and over if you let them."

— An opposing MAC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

Returning Starters in Bold

OFFENSE (4)				
WR	3	**Cameron Odom (Jr.)**	6	Isiah Cox (So.)
WR	8	Jerome Buckner (Fr.)	19	DL Knock (Sr.)
WR	5	Shane Hooks (Fr.)	14	K.J. Minter (So.)
LT	60	**Austen Pleasants (Sr.)**	79	Brody Rodgers (So.)
LG	61	**Brett Kitrell (Jr.)**	72	Kurt Danneker (Fr.)
C	73	Steven Hayes (Sr.)	70	Nick Sink (Jr.)
RG	76	Hagen Meservy (Jr.)	77	Adam Notestine (Jr.)
RT	53	Marques Grimes (Sr.)	68	Felipe Fernandez (Jr.)
TE	88	Ryan Luehrman (Jr.)	44	Adam Luehrman (Jr.)
QB	12	**Nathan Rourke (Sr.)**	10	Joe Mischler (Fr.)
RB	28	O'Shaan Allison (Fr.)	2	Julian Ross (So.)
DEFENSE (7)				
DE	88	**Amos Ogun-Semore (So.)**	47	Austin Conrad (Jr.)
DT	43	Cole Baker (Sr.)	16	Marcus Coleman (So.)
NT	99	Brian Arp (Sr.)	92	Zach Burks (Jr.)
DE	9	**Will Evans (Jr.)**	55	Sam McKnight (Sr.)
OLB	35	**Dylan Conner (Jr.)**	19	Jeremiah Wood (Fr.)
MLB	49	**Jared Dorsa (Jr.)**	36	Austin Clack (Sr.)
OLB	34	Eric Popp (Sr.)	29	T.J. Robinson (So.)
CB	4	**Jamal Hudson (Jr.)**	23	Ilyaas Motley (Jr.)
CB	22	**Marlin Brooks (Jr.)**	11	Tariq Drake (So.)
S	7	**Javon Hagan (Sr.)**	8	Jamison Collier (Fr.)
S	12	Jarren Hampton (Jr.)	20	Alvin Floyd (So.)
SPECIAL TEAMS				
K	2	Louie Zervos (Sr.)	KR	2 Julian Ross (So.)
P	5	Michael Farkas (Sr.)	PR	26 Tyler Walton (Fr.)

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Nathan Rourke, 274-164-2,434-8, 23 TDs
Rushing: Nathan Rourke, 134 att., 860 yds., 15 TDs
Receiving: Cameron Odom, 30 rec., 418 yds., 2 TDs
Tackles: Javon Hagan, 79
Sacks: Amos Ogun-Semore, 2.5
Interceptions: 3 players tied with 2

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Frank Solich
Record at School: 106-75 (14 years)
Career Record: 164-94 (20 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Tim Albin
Defensive Coordinators: Ron Collins, Pete Germano
Athens, OH • Peden Stadium (24,000)

Ball State **Cardinals**

National Forecast: **114** • MAC West Prediction: **5** • Projected Record: **4-8, 3-5 MAC**

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	vs. Indiana #
Sept.	7	Fordham
Sept.	14	Florida Atlantic
Sept.	21	at NC State
Oct.	5	at Northern Illinois
Oct.	12	at Eastern Michigan
Oct.	19	Toledo
Oct.	26	Ohio
Nov.	5	at Western Michigan
Nov.	16	Central Michigan
Nov.	23	at Kent State
Nov.	29	Miami (Ohio)

#Indianapolis, IN

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 4-8, 3-5 MAC

Aug.	30	Central Conn.	W	42-6
Sept.	8	at Notre Dame	L	16-24
Sept.	15	at Indiana	L	10-38
Sept.	22	Western Kentucky	L	20-28
Sept.	29	Kent State	W	52-24
Oct.	6	Northern Illinois	L	16-24
Oct.	13	at Central Michigan	W	24-23
Oct.	20	Eastern Michigan	L	20-42
Oct.	25	at Ohio	L	14-52
Oct.	31	at Toledo	L	13-45
Nov.	13	Western Mich. (ot)	W	42-41
Nov.	20	at Miami (Ohio)	L	21-42

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Jalen McGaughy, WR, Detroit, MI
2. Rahmon Hart, WR, Pittsburgh, PA
3. Nic Jones, CB, Southfield, MI
4. Solvauhn Moreland, DT, Aliquippa, PA
5. Brandon Berger, LB, Indianapolis, IN
6. Clayton Coll, LB, Franklin, IN
7. Tavion Woodard, LB, West Lafayette, IN
8. Chris Crothers, TE, Mishawaka, IN*
9. Derin McCulley, CB, Indianapolis, IN
10. Eddie Schott, QB, Indianapolis, IN

*junior college transfer

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	MAC	NATIONAL
Scoring	24.2 ppg	8	100
Rushing	155.7 ypg	8	84
Passing	252.9 ypg	1	43
Total	408.6 ypg	5	64
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**MAC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	32.4 ppg	9	96
Rushing	239.8 ypg	11	120
Passing	210.4 ypg	7	48
Total	450.3 ypg	11	109
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**MAC**	**NATIONAL**
-4	-0.33	9	91

STAT CORNER

4.2

Ball State was 102nd in FBS in points scored per trip inside the opponent's 40 (4.2) and 98th in points per trip allowed (5.0).

OFFENSE It looked for a moment as if all the pieces were finally in place. Ball State had survived an injury-driven depth chart armageddon on offense in 2017 and dealt with quite a few injuries on defense in 2018, and now head coach Mike Neu would finally have a battle-tested roster and make a run at BSU's first bowl in six seasons in 2019.

Technically, this could still happen. But it got harder when Riley Neal and James Gilbert left. Both took graduate transfers — Neal to Vanderbilt and Gilbert to Kansas State — leaving the Cardinals far less experienced than anticipated in key areas.

There's still hope. Neal was hurt quite a bit over the last couple of years, which gave backups some reps. Presumptive new starter Drew Plitt got enough to throw for 1,008 yards, with a completion rate (65 percent) quite a bit higher than Neal's (58). He seems accurate enough at the shorter passes that drive coordinator Joey Lynch's offense — Lynch wants to spread defenses out, hopefully opening up both running lanes and vertical passing lanes in the process.

The QB will have an exciting receiving corps at his disposal. Riley Miller is a dangerous deep threat; Justin Hall is efficient in the slot; and while Yo'Heinz Tyler caught only 14 passes as a freshman, he made them count, gaining 226 yards and scoring twice.

Gilbert was more efficient than explosive in the run game, and his backups posted similar numbers. Caleb Huntley or Malik Dunner could end up getting the lion's share of carries, but there's a wild card in Edinboro grad transfer Walter Fletcher. They'll have an experienced line blocking for them.

DEFENSE BSU moved to more of a 3-4 alignment last fall, and it seemed like it was working for a while. After allowing 40.7 points per game in 2017, the Cardinals cut that to 23.9 through seven games. The depth still wasn't where it needed to be, however, and it took only a handful of injuries to bring everything down. The Cardinals gave up 44.4 points per game over the final five contests.

From an experience standpoint, at least, the depth is infinitely better now. BSU brings back five linemen, seven linebackers and five defensive backs who were involved in at least 10 tackles last season. In outside linebackers Ray Wilborn and Christian Albright, who combined for 18.5 tackles for a loss and 8.5 sacks last fall, the Cardinals have at least a couple of legitimate playmakers. They could use more.

The secondary was so young last year that it's still young: The leading returning tacklers are three juniors and two sophomores. Corner Antonio Phillips and safety Bryce Cosby both have high-level potential, but there are still growing pains to endure.

SPECIALISTS BSU struggled on special teams in 2018. Kicker Morgan Hagee's big leg was probably the best thing the Cardinals had going for them, but he's gone. Hall and Dunner have potential in the return game, but it hasn't been realized yet.

FINAL ANALYSIS After a promising first season in charge, Neu has struggled, going just 6–18 since. Still, the Cardinals doubled their win total from two to four in 2018, and even without Neal, they should be in enough close games to perhaps improve that total again. The ceiling still isn't high, but with this level of experience, it's higher than it has been in a few years.

Justin Hall

"Defensively they do a lot of great stuff with pressures. They can make you uncomfortable in the passing game and get after the quarterback."

— An opposing MAC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (9)				Returning Starters in Bold
WR	86	**Riley Miller (Sr.)**		Jalen McGaughy (Fr.)
WR	85	Yo'Heinz Tyler (So.)	89	Khalil Newton (So.)
SLOT	12	Justin Hall (Jr.)	1	Antwan Davis (Sr.)
LT	77	**Kaleb Slaven (Jr.)**	76	Luke Martin (Fr.)
LG	71	**Zac Ricketts (Sr.)**	53	Jaylen Turner (Fr.)
C	64	**Andrew Poenitsch (Sr.)**	55	**Chris Beech (Jr.)**
RG	62	**Curtis Blackwell (Jr.)**	57	Jake McKenzie (So.)
RT	75	**Danny Pinter (Sr.)**	72	Anthony Todd (Jr.)
TE	88	**Nolan Givan (Jr.)**	81	**Kyle Schrank (Sr.)**
QB	9	Drew Plitt (Jr.)	18	John Paddock (Fr.)
RB	36	Caleb Huntley (Jr.)		Walter Fletcher (Sr.)
DEFENSE (9)				
DE	56	**Shannon Hall (Sr.)**	94	Jack Sape (Fr.)
NT	42	**Chris Crumb (Sr.)**	55	Tuni Ropati (Sr.)
DE	35	James Jennette III (Jr.)	95	Emeka Jillani (So.)
SLB	11	**Ray Wilborn (Sr.)**	44	Brock Burns (So.)
MLB	2	**Jacob White (Sr.)**	9	Brandon Martin (Jr.)
WLB	6	**Jaylin Thomas (Jr.)**	27	Jimmy Daw (So.)
OLB	51	**Christian Albright (Jr.)**	13	Jordan Williams (So.)
CB	21	**Antonio Phillips (Jr.)**		Nic Jones (Fr.)
CB	25	Amechi Uzodinma II (So.)	16	Tyler "Red" Potts (Fr.)
FS	23	**Brett Anderson II (Jr.)**	20	Myles Hannah (So.)
SS	5	**Bryce Cosby (Jr.)**	29	Mitch Larsen (Jr.)
SPECIAL TEAMS				
K	97	Ryan Rimmler (Sr.)	KR 4	Malik Dunner (Sr.)
P	49	Patrick LeCorre (Sr.)	PR 12	Justin Hall (Jr.)

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Drew Plitt, 131-85-1,008-8, 6 TDs
Rushing: Malik Dunner, 66 att., 305 yds., 4 TDs
Receiving: Justin Hall, 69 rec., 622 yds., 0 TDs
Tackles: Bryce Cosby, Ray Wilborn, 83
Sacks: Christian Albright, 5.5
Interceptions: 3 players tied with 2

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Mike Neu
Record at School: 10-26 (3 years)
Career Record: 10-26 (3 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Joey Lynch
Defensive Coordinators: David Elson, Tyler Stockton
Muncie, IN • Scheumann Stadium (22,500)

Michael Hickey

Central Michigan **Chippewas**

National Forecast: **120** • MAC West Prediction: **6** • Projected Record: **4-8, 2-6 MAC**

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	29	Albany
Sept.	7	at Wisconsin
Sept.	14	Akron
Sept.	21	at Miami (Fla.)
Sept.	28	at Western Michigan
Oct.	5	Eastern Michigan
Oct.	12	New Mexico State
Oct.	19	at Bowling Green
Oct.	26	at Buffalo
Nov.	2	Northern Illinois
Nov.	16	at Ball State
Nov.	29	Toledo

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 1-11, 0-8 MAC

Sept.	1	at Kentucky	L	20-35
Sept.	8	Kansas	L	7-31
Sept.	15	at Northern Illinois	L	16-24
Sept.	22	Maine	W	17-5
Sept.	29	at Michigan State	L	20-31
Oct.	6	Buffalo	L	24-34
Oct.	13	Ball State	L	23-24
Oct.	20	Western Michigan	L	10-35
Oct.	27	at Akron	L	10-17
Nov.	3	at Eastern Michigan	L	7-17
Nov.	10	Bowling Green	L	13-24
Nov.	23	at Toledo	L	13-51

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Lew Nichols, RB, Detroit, MI
2. David Moore, QB, Alpharetta, GA*
3. Cameron Vaughn, OT, Orlando, FL
4. Kyron McKinnie-Harper, DB, Detroit, MI
5. Ormondell Dingle, S, Detroit, MI
6. Danny Motowski, C, Macomb, MI
7. Jake Dominguez, OG, San Jose, CA*
8. Demarcus Governor, CB, Plant City, FL
9. Daniel Richardson, QB, Miami, FL
10. Vashon Bailey, OT, Sunrise, FL

*junior college transfer

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	MAC	NATIONAL
Scoring	15.0 ppg	12	128
Rushing	120.2 ypg	10	117
Passing	134.5 ypg	12	123
Total	254.7 ypg	12	129
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**MAC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	27.3 ppg	7	70
Rushing	204.7 ypg	9	104
Passing	150.7 ypg	2	4
Total	355.3 ypg	2	36
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**MAC**	**NATIONAL**
-5	-0.42	10	104

STAT CORNER

-1.7

CMU averaged 1.7 fewer yards per play in 2018 (3.8) than in 2017 (5.5), the third-largest regression in FBS and largest in the MAC.

OFFENSE Quarterback was a major problem last year, and while the top two signal callers are back, expect a changing of the guard after Tony Poljan and Tommy Lazzaro both struggled. Senior transfer Quinten Dormady, previously at Tennessee and Houston, will get first crack at starting after being a hyped four-star recruit out of high school. Redshirt freshman George Pearson showed promise in limited action and might get a shot at the backup spot ahead of Lazzaro. And while Lazzaro is not the most accurate passer, he did rush for 381 yards and three TDs. At the very least, the Chippewas have options.

Central Michigan really struggled in the run game, partly because of a shoddy offensive line, but the Chippewas do return senior running backs Jonathan Ward and Romello Ross, who have a track record of flourishing at various times during their careers. If they falter, CMU could opt to give younger backs such as Kobe Lewis and Lew Nichols a shot.

Fourteen wide receivers are listed on the roster, but the Chippewas need to find a go-to threat or two. Expect Virginia Tech transfer Kalil Pimpleton to be targeted in a variety of ways, as he is as explosive as anyone on the roster. Last season's top pass catcher Julian Hicks entered the transfer portal in late April, creating opportunities for several inexperienced wideouts to take on a leading role.

Senior center Steve Eipper headlines an offensive line that returns a good deal of experience but is undersized and has a lot to prove under the guidance of offensive line coach Mike Cummings.

DEFENSE This side of the ball kept Central Michigan in a lot of games last year despite getting little to no help from the offense. But it might be difficult to duplicate the production of the last couple seasons. The Chippewas lost their best pass rusher to transfer and their top tackler to graduation, and the top two cornerbacks declared as juniors for the NFL Draft.

After a strong freshman season, safety Devonni Reed (97 tackles, three pass break-ups) will be looked to as a leader despite his underclassman status. Fellow safety Da'Quaun Jamison helps make that a position of strength, while Michael Oliver will fill big shoes at middle linebacker, where tackle machine Malik Fountain formerly roamed.

The defensive line is in need of capable pass rushers. Expect Sean Adesanya (7.0 tackles for a loss) and Michigan transfer Deron Irving-Bey (if eligible) to play big roles. On the interior, Robi Stuart and D'Andre Dill should provide plenty of beef in stopping the run.

SPECIALISTS Placekicker Ryan Tice was a dynamo last year, making 10-of-12 field goal attempts, including 6-of-7 between 40 and 49 yards and a long of 53. The only punter on the roster heading into camp is freshman Luke Elzinga. If Pimpleton gets a shot at returning punts, he could be among the best in the MAC.

FINAL ANALYSIS The head coaching career of Jim McElwain makes a surprising stop in Mount Pleasant. He might be inclined to stick around even if he has a lot of success, as he is 57 years old and was unceremoniously fired at Florida midway through his third season. There might be some growing pains for CMU in Year 1 under McElwain, but a solid first recruiting class and some incoming transfers give plenty of reason for future optimism.

Devonni Reed

"Jim McElwain has a lot of work to do. That roster bottomed out, and it was one of the worst offenses we've seen in this conference."

— An opposing MAC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

Returning Starters in Bold

OFFENSE (4)				
WR	6	**Brandon Childress (Sr.)**	82	Cameron Cole (Sr.)
WR	88	Kalil Pimpleton (So.)	84	Bailey Edwards (So.)
WR	80	Drayton Law (So.)	11	JaCorey Sullivan (Jr.)
LT	54	JaRaymond Hall (So.)	**56**	**Derek Smith (Jr.)**
LG	68	Erik Ditzhazy (So.)	51	Shawn Wiley (Fr.)
C	**60**	**Steve Eipper (Sr.)**	66	Tyden Ferris (Fr.)
RG	**50**	**Jamezz Kimbrough (So.)**		Danny Motowski (Fr.)
RT		Jake Dominguez (Jr.)	79	Nick Follmer (So.)
TE	86	Bernhard Raimann (So.)	85	Tony Poljan (Jr.)
QB	10	Quinten Dormady (Sr.)	12	George Pearson (Fr.)
RB	5	Jonathan Ward (Sr.)	3	Romello Ross (Sr.)
DEFENSE (4)				
DE		Deron Irving-Bey (Sr.)	34	Amir Siddiq (So.)
DT	**55**	**D'Andre Dill (Sr.)**	98	LaQuan Johnson (Fr.)
DT	71	Robi Stuart (Jr.)	70	Johnathan Berghorst (Fr.)
DE	2	Sean Adesanya (Sr.)	92	Dante Cleveland (Jr.)
OLB	29	Troy Brown (So.)	30	George Douglas (So.)
MLB	**39**	**Michael Oliver (Sr.)**	45	Troy Hairston (Jr.)
OLB	43	Andrew Ward (So.)	40	Christian Mercer (Sr.)
CB	27	Brandon Brown (So.)	23	Randall Harris (Fr.)
CB	24	Darius Bracy (So.)	37	Rolliann Sturkey (So.)
S	**5**	**Devonni Reed (So.)**	20	Gage Kreski (Jr.)
S	**6**	**Da'Quaun Jamison (Sr.)**	1	Alonzo McCoy (Jr.)
SPECIAL TEAMS				
K	12	Ryan Tice (Sr.)	**KR** 38	Kobe Lewis (So.)
P		Luke Elzinga (Fr.)	**PR** 88	Kalil Pimpleton (So.)

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Tommy Lazzaro, 141-68-711-10, 5 TDs
Rushing: Romello Ross, 89 att., 402 yds., 2 TDs
Receiving: Cameron Cole, 19 rec., 185 yds., 0 TDs
Tackles: Devonni Reed, 97
Sacks: LaQuan Johnson, 2.0
Interceptions: 4 players tied with 1

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Jim McElwain
Record at School: First Season
Career Record: 44-28 (5+ years)
Offensive Coordinator: Charlie Frye
Defensive Coordinator: Robb Akey
Mount Pleasant, MI • Kelly/Shorts Stadium (30,255)

Central Michigan Athletics

Eastern Michigan **Eagles**

National Forecast: **101** • MAC West Prediction: **4** • Projected Record: **6-6, 5-3 MAC**

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	at Coastal Carolina
Sept.	7	at Kentucky
Sept.	14	at Illinois
Sept.	21	C. Connecticut St.
Oct.	5	at Central Michigan
Oct.	12	Ball State
Oct.	19	Western Michigan
Oct.	26	at Toledo
Nov.	2	Buffalo
Nov.	12	at Akron
Nov.	19	at Northern Illinois
Nov.	29	Kent State

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 7-6, 5-3 MAC

Aug.	31	Monmouth	W	51-17
Sept.	8	at Purdue	W	20-19
Sept.	15	at Buffalo	L	28-35
Sept.	22	at San Diego State (ot)	L	20-23
Sept.	29	Northern Illinois (ot)	L	23-26
Oct.	6	at Western Michigan	L	24-27
Oct.	13	Toledo	W	28-26
Oct.	20	at Ball State	W	42-20
Oct.	27	Army	L	22-37
Nov.	3	Central Michigan	W	17-7
Nov.	10	Akron	W	27-7
Nov.	23	at Kent State	W	28-20
Dec.	15	vs. Georgia Southern #	L	21-23

#Camellia Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. John Branham Jr., RB, Columbus, OH
2. Darius Boone, RB, Tulsa, OK
3. Jimi McAdams, OG, Cleveland, OH
4. De'Anthony Ball, WR, Atlanta, GA
5. Brandon Burks, OLB, Reynoldsburg, OH*
6. William Racely, OG, Flushing, MI
7. Alex Merritt, DL, Cincinnati, OH
8. Mark Lee, CB, Columbus, OH
9. Aaron Hamilton, DT, Alpharetta, GA
10. Bryson Cannon, TE, Columbia, SC*

*junior college transfer

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	MAC	NATIONAL
Scoring	27.0 ppg	6	81
Rushing	145.4 ypg	9	97
Passing	226.7 ypg	5	71
Total	372.1 ypg	7	93
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**MAC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	22.1 ppg	1	30
Rushing	203.5 ypg	8	102
Passing	150.2 ypg	1	3
Total	353.8 ypg	1	35
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**MAC**	**NATIONAL**
+10	+0.77	2	11

STAT CORNER

.353

Close games are fickle. In 2016, EMU went 5-2 in one-possession finishes (0.714 win percentage). Since then: 6-11 (0.353).

OFFENSE Eastern Michigan's offense ranked in the middle of the pack in the MAC last season, but there is clear opportunity for improvement with a returning core that includes an exciting senior quarterback. Mike Glass III, a former junior college transfer who was second in the MAC in passing efficiency (158.7) as a junior in eight games of action, also showed his wheels with 412 rushing yards and six TDs on 71 carries.

There will be several familiar playmakers around Glass, including veteran running back Shaq Vann. After bursting onto the scene as a freshman and opening his sophomore campaign in stellar fashion until an injury setback, Vann will look to finish out his career in style after his yards per carry dropped to 4.5 the last two years. If Vann isn't up to par, the Eagles could look to Willie Parker or Breck Turner to get the job done after they combined for 96 carries last season. Another interesting name to watch at running back is true freshman John Branham Jr., the most ballyhooed EMU recruit since former quarterback Brogan Roback stepped on campus.

Expect senior wide receivers Arthur Jackson III (46 catches, 592 yards, five TDs), Mathew Sexton and Line Latu all to take a step forward as long as Glass continues to progress. Eastern Michigan should also be in good hands with a veteran offensive line led by mammoth 6'8" right tackle Steve Nielsen.

DEFENSE This group led the MAC last season in scoring defense (22.1 ppg), total defense (353.8 ypg) and pass defense (150.2 ypg). As long as the Eagles can find some capable pass rushers, they should be in solid shape again with so much returning in the secondary. Back in the fold are a pair of senior safeties in Vince Calhoun and Brody Hoying, both third-team All-MAC performers in 2018 who have a knack for finding the ball. Eastern Michigan also returns two of its top three cornerbacks in Kevin McGill (38 tackles, three INT) and Freddie McGee III.

The interior of the defensive line brings back C.J. Hunt, who started five games as a redshirt freshman, but EMU will need outside help from the likes of junior college transfers Jose Ramirez and Grant Trueman, as well as others.

Linebacker is also a question mark following the graduation of two starters. Transfer Brandon Burks and Terry Myrick will likely get a crack at the starting lineup, but the two open spots will be a position battle to watch in August.

SPECIALISTS Jake Julien has the potential to be the best punter in the MAC after averaging 43.3 yards per boot last season with a long of 73 and 24 punts placed inside the 20-yard line. Placekicker Chad Ryland will have to improve his efficiency in order to hold on to his job after missing six out of eight attempts between 30 and 39 yards in 2018.

FINAL ANALYSIS If Eastern Michigan can be anywhere in the neighborhood of where it was defensively last season, the ceiling is as high as winning the MAC. But the Eagles need to figure out how to win the close games, as five of their six losses last season were by a touchdown or less. Coach Chris Creighton has been a proven winner at other stops and still has his sights set on bigger and better things heading into his sixth season at EMU.

Shaq Vann

"A really tough team to play, really physical and nasty. They're sound defensively. They're not far from being a really good team."

— An opposing MAC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (5)				Returning Starters in Bold
WR	**87**	**Mathew Sexton (Sr.)**	80	Dylan Drummond (So.)
WR	**89**	**Arthur Jackson III (Sr.)**	11	Isaac Holder (Sr.)
WR	8	Line Latu (Sr.)	81	Quian Williams (So.)
LT	**62**	**Sidy Sow (So.)**	57	Michael Smith Jr. (Jr.)
LG	69	Jake Donnellon (Jr.)	76	Richard Bates Jr. (Jr.)
C	60	Mike Van Hoeven (Jr.)	70	Samari Saddler (Fr.)
RG	75	Yannik Rohrschneider (So.)	68	Alex Howie (Fr.)
RT	**74**	**Steve Nielsen (Sr.)**	71	Marcellus Johnson (Fr.)
TE	88	Bryce Kemp (Sr.)	85	Thomas Odukoya (Sr.)
QB	9	Mike Glass III (Sr.)	7	Isaac Stiebeling (Jr.)
RB	**5**	**Shaq Vann (Sr.)**	33	Breck Turner (Sr.)
DEFENSE (3)				
DE		Jose Ramirez (So.)	91	Clay Holford (Sr.)
DT	97	C.J. Hunt (So.)	77	Ty Eddington (Sr.)
NT	94	Hunter Andrews (Sr.)	52	Desmond Kelly (Sr.)
DE	99	Turan Rush (Jr.)	90	Grant Trueman (Jr.)
LB	32	Terry Myrick (Jr.)	49	Desean Boyd (So.)
LB	55	Brandon Burks (Jr.)	10	Kobie Beltram (Sr.)
CB	35	Freddie McGee III (Jr.)	31	Otis Jackson III (So.)
CB	**4**	**Kevin McGill (Sr.)**	12	Jeff Hubbard (Jr.)
S	**24**	**Brody Hoying (Sr.)**	21	Jordan Porter (Jr.)
S	1	Jalen Phelps (Sr.)	23	Blake Bogan (So.)
S	**3**	**Vince Calhoun (Sr.)**	9	Carthell Flowers (So.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	38	Chad Ryland (So.)	**KR**	89	Arthur Jackson III (Sr.)
P	31	Jake Julien (Jr.)	**PR**	87	Mathew Sexton (Sr.)

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Mike Glass III, 117-72-1,024-1, 9 TDs
Rushing: Shaq Vann, 135 att., 590 yds., 5 TDs
Receiving: Arthur Jackson III, 46 rec., 592 yds., 5 TDs
Tackles: Vince Calhoun, 84
Sacks: Turan Rush, 3.0
Interceptions: Vince Calhoun, Kevin McGill, 3

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Chris Creighton
Record at School: 22-40 (5 years)
Career Record: 158-86 (22 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Aaron Keen
Defensive Coordinator: Neal Neathery
Ypsilanti, MI • Rynearson Stadium (30,200)

Eastern Michigan Athletics

Northern Illinois **Huskies**

National Forecast: **91** • MAC West Prediction: **3** • Projected Record: **6-6, 5-3 MAC**

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	Illinois State
Sept.	7	at Utah
Sept.	14	at Nebraska
Sept.	28	at Vanderbilt
Oct.	5	Ball State
Oct.	12	at Ohio
Oct.	19	at Miami (Ohio)
Oct.	26	Akron
Nov.	2	at Central Michigan
Nov.	13	at Toledo
Nov.	19	Eastern Michigan
Nov.	26	Western Michigan

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 8-6, 6-2 MAC

Sept.	1	at Iowa	L	7-33
Sept.	8	Utah	L	6-17
Sept.	15	Central Michigan	W	24-16
Sept.	22	at Florida State	L	19-37
Sept.	29	at Eastern Mich. (ot)	W	26-23
Oct.	6	at Ball State	W	24-16
Oct.	13	Ohio	W	24-21
Oct.	27	at BYU	W	7-6
Nov.	1	at Akron	W	36-26
Nov.	7	Toledo	W	38-15
Nov.	14	Miami (Ohio)	L	7-13
Nov.	20	at Western Michigan	L	21-28
Nov.	30	vs. Buffalo #	W	30-29
Dec.	18	vs. UAB %	L	13-37

#Detroit %Boca Raton Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Fabian McCray, WR, Chicago, IL
2. Justin Clark, ATH, Aurora, IL
3. Romel Goston, CB, Chicago, IL
4. Mohamed Toure, WR, Irvington, NJ
5. Leif Engstrand, OT, Oconomowoc, WI
6. Tyrice Richie, WR, Chicago Heights, IL*
7. Mariano Valenti, QB, Rochester, MI
8. Michael Love, RB, La Grange Park, IL
9. Cam Mattox, DE, Markham, IL
10. Tyrik Henderson, CB, Carol Stream, CT

*junior college transfer

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	MAC	NATIONAL
Scoring	20.1 ppg	10	121
Rushing	166.9 ypg	6	70
Passing	155.4 ypg	11	120
Total	322.3 ypg	10	124
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**MAC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	22.6 ppg	2	34
Rushing	109.2 ypg	1	11
Passing	247.8 ypg	10	95
Total	357.0 ypg	4	40
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**MAC**	**NATIONAL**
-1	-0.07	7	72

STAT CORNER

4.2

NIU averaged 4.8 yards per play on first down (127th) but countered that by allowing only 4.2 (first). Second-and-longs all around!

OFFENSE After watching film of some up-and-down play from quarterback Marcus Childers last season, Northern Illinois first-year coach Thomas Hammock declared the starting job wide open. Childers had some big moments in his sophomore season, leading the Huskies to the MAC Championship Game. But he showed inconsistency, completing only 58.9 percent of his passes.

California transfer Ross Bowers is an interesting candidate to run the offense. Bowers, a pro-style quarterback, might better fit Hammock's multiple-look attack, which will include plenty of reps out of the shotgun.

The top three running backs from last season all return, led by Tre Harbison and Marcus Jones. Harbison ran for 1,034 yards, while Jones is a sturdy, every-down back. Jordan Nettles is a dynamic runner worthy of more carries.

The offensive line is mainly a revamped unit following the graduation of left tackle Max Scharping and center Luke Shively. But three starters return, headlined by senior right tackle Jordan Steckler.

Look for more production out of the tight end position, Hammock says. Mitchell Brinkman is the leading returnee, but he caught just six passes for 79 yards last season. The top two receivers from last season have graduated, but the Huskies developed quality talent behind them. Spencer Tears is slated to be a bigger threat in the offense after catching 40 passes for 422 yards and four touchdowns last season.

DEFENSE You can't lose a two-time All-America defensive end and not expect a slight dip. Sutton Smith declared for the NFL Draft after becoming only the second consensus All-American in program history. Replacing Smith's 15 sacks and 26.5 tackles for a loss will be a massive undertaking.

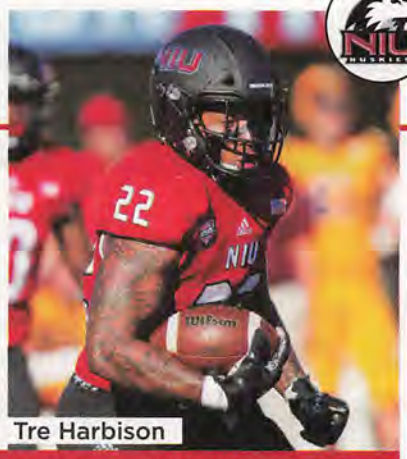
The 4-3 is solid up front. There's plenty of experience, notably in defensive tackles Jack Heflin and Weston Kramer. The linebacking corps is definitely an area of strength, especially with Antonio Jones-Davis and middle linebacker Kyle Pugh. Jones-Davis ranked fourth in the conference with a team-high 130 tackles, while Pugh tallied 106 stops.

Four safeties with experience return, and they'll join sophomore cornerback Jalen McKie. At safety, Mykelti Williams (75 tackles, two interceptions) and Trayshon Foster (56 tackles) form a solid duo.

SPECIALISTS Hammock plans to use some of his best players on return and coverage teams. Punter Matt Ference must improve on his 40.4-yard average, which ranked sixth in the conference. The placekicking job remains wide open after the graduation of Andrew Gantz. McKie and Foster are the early candidates for the return spots.

FINAL ANALYSIS Under Hammock, the Huskies will have a different look than past teams, especially with his lack of head coaching experience and a varied staff. Hammock's main job centers on lifting the program to its previous heights, when it cracked the national rankings and won bowl games.

Losing a rare talent like Smith is a big blow to a vulnerable defense. But the offense is filled with playmakers, and the defense is strong up the middle. If the Huskies can get some momentum with a key nonconference win and receive some consistent play at quarterback, this season could build momentum for future success.



Tre Harbison

"They're always a little bit deeper than most of the teams in this conference, and it shows in their consistency. They are always solid."

— An opposing MAC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (7)				Returning Starters in Bold
WR	14	**Spencer Tears (Sr.)**	13	Leon Payne (Fr.)
WR		Tyrice Richie (Jr.)	19	Jyran Mitchell (Fr.)
WR	18	Cole Tucker (So.)	17	Dennis Robinson (So.)
LT	71	Isaac Hawn (Jr.)	70	Marques Cox (Fr.)
LG	62	**Christopher Perez Jr. (Sr.)**	61	Benn Olson (Jr.)
C	54	Austin Warner (Jr.)	61	Benn Olson (Jr.)
RG	65	**Nathan Veloz (Sr.)**	58	**Brayden Patton (Jr.)**
RT	72	**Jordan Steckler (Sr.)**	69	Nolan Potter (Fr.)
TE	89	Mitchell Brinkman (Jr.)	88	Daniel Crawford (Sr.)
QB	15	**Marcus Childers (Jr.)**		Ross Bowers (Sr.)
RB	21	Marcus Jones (Sr.)	22	**Tre Harbison (Jr.)**
DEFENSE (7)				
DE	41	Matt Lorbeck (Jr.)	93	Quintin Wynne (Sr.)
DT	98	Jack Heflin (Jr.)	91	Jeffrey Griffin Jr. (Fr.)
NG	55	**Weston Kramer (Jr.)**	99	**Ben LeRoy (Sr.)**
DE	47	Michael Kennedy (So.)	95	Jawon Denton (So.)
OLB	37	**Lance Deveaux Jr. (Sr.)**	45	Jordan Cole (So.)
MLB	57	**Kyle Pugh (Sr.)**	50	Vinny Labus (So.)
OLB	48	**Antonio Jones-Davis (Sr.)**	13	Joe Bonds (Fr.)
CB	49	Jalen McKie (So.)	20	Zhamaine March (So.)
CB	31	Devin Haney (So.)	16	J.D. Harris (Fr.)
S	8	**Mykelti Williams (Sr.)**	29	Adam Buirge (Sr.)
S	11	**Trayshon Foster (Sr.)**	24	Trequan Smith (Sr.)
SPECIAL TEAMS				
K	39	John Richardson (Fr.)	KR 49	Jalen McKie (So.)
P	36	Matt Ference (Jr.)	PR 11	Trayshon Foster (Sr.)

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Marcus Childers, 397-234-2,195-10, 15 TDs
Rushing: Tre Harbison, 206 att., 1,034 yds., 5 TDs
Receiving: Spencer Tears, 40 rec., 422 yds., 4 TDs
Tackles: Antonio Jones-Davis, 130
Sacks: Jack Heflin, 6.0
Interceptions: Jalen McKie, 2; Mykelti Williams, 2

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Thomas Hammock
Record at School: First Season
Career Record: First Season
Offensive Coordinator: Eric Eidsness
Defensive Coordinators: Derrick Jackson, Robert Wimberly
DeKalb, IL • Huskie Stadium (23,595)

Northern Illinois Athletics

Toledo **Rockets**

National Forecast: **83** • MAC West Prediction: **1** • Projected Record: **8-5, 6-2 MAC**

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	at Kentucky
Sept.	14	Murray State
Sept.	21	at Colorado State
Sept.	28	BYU
Oct.	5	Western Michigan
Oct.	12	at Bowling Green
Oct.	19	at Ball State
Oct.	26	Eastern Michigan
Nov.	5	Kent State
Nov.	13	Northern Illinois
Nov.	20	at Buffalo
Nov.	29	at Central Michigan

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 7-6, 5-3 MAC

Sept.	1	VMI	W	66-3
Sept.	15	Miami (Fla.)	L	24-49
Sept.	22	Nevada	W	63-44
Sept.	29	at Fresno State	L	27-49
Oct.	6	Bowling Green	W	52-36
Oct.	13	at Eastern Michigan	L	26-28
Oct.	20	Buffalo	L	17-31
Oct.	25	at Western Michigan	W	51-24
Oct.	31	Ball State	W	45-13
Nov.	7	at Northern Illinois	L	15-38
Nov.	15	at Kent State	W	56-34
Nov.	23	Central Michigan	W	51-13
Dec.	21	vs. FIU #	L	32-35

#Bahamas Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Justin Stephens, TE, Dayton, OH
2. Jerjuan Newton, WR, St. Petersburg, FL
3. Micah Kelly, RB, Pascagoula, MS
4. Chris'Seon Stringer, WR, Cincinnati, OH
5. Dequan Finn, QB, Detroit, MI
6. Michael Bergen, OT, Avon, OH
7. Joe Smith, OLB, Miami, FL
8. Terrel Ferrell, WR, Brandon, FL
9. Jacquez Stuart, ATH, Miami, FL
10. Troy Simon, CB, Alpharetta, GA*

*junior college transfer

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	MAC	NATIONAL
Scoring	40.4 ppg	1	9
Rushing	215.9 ypg	2	25
Passing	227.9 ypg	4	69
Total	443.8 ypg	2	30
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**MAC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	30.5 ppg	8	84
Rushing	177.2 ypg	6	79
Passing	255.1 ypg	12	103
Total	432.3 ypg	9	93
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**MAC**	**NATIONAL**
+3	+0.23	5	46

STAT CORNER

+8.2

Efficient offense and strong special teams created a spectacular field position advantage: 8.2 yards per drive, first in FBS.

OFFENSE The Rockets and fourth-year coach Jason Candle return some essential parts of an offensive unit that scored at least 50 points six times in 2018, a school record. Duplicating that kind of production will be a challenge, since Toledo lost three all-conference wide receivers.

There is experience and depth at quarterback with senior Mitchell Guadagni and junior Eli Peters. Guadagni started seven games in an injury-shortened season, throwing for 1,053 yards and 13 touchdowns. Peters started six games and threw for 1,837 yards and 18 scores.

Sophomore Bryant Koback and junior Shakif Seymour provide a solid rotation at running back. Koback, who averaged 6.0 yards per carry, led Toledo with 917 yards and 14 touchdowns in 2018, and Seymour has scored 17 TDs over the past two seasons.

With the cupboard nearly swept clean at receiver, senior Desmond Phillips is the top returner with 27 receptions in 2018. Senior tight end Reggie Gilliam, a second-team All-MAC choice in 2018, had three receptions for scores last season.

The protection up front will be led by the return of three senior starters in center Bryce Harris, a second-team All-MAC pick, huge left tackle Cameron Bell and right guard Yazeed Atariwa.

DEFENSE Toledo had a successful season in 2018 by simply outscoring enough of its opponents — not due to the performance of its defense, which landed near the bottom tier of the conference in allowing 432.3 yards and 30.5 points per game.

Against the pass, the Rockets were the league's worst, allowing 255.1 yards per game. But with a wealth of experience returning up front, Toledo looks to put more pressure on opposing quarterbacks. Returning starters Nate Childress (tackle) and Jamal Hines (end) will anchor the unit after combining for 81 tackles last season, while Willie Ross, Desjuan Johnson and Devonté Dunn all saw regular action.

Converted tight end Jordan Fisher is the top returner at linebacker after racking up 59 tackles in 2018. The Rockets will look to Evander Craft, Erik Davis and Dyontae Johnson to fill the other slots.

The secondary is more established, with safeties Kahlil Robinson and DeDarallo Blue and cornerback Justin Clark all returning as starters. Robinson has five career interceptions, while Blue has made 26 starts and Clark recorded 35 tackles in 2018.

SPECIALISTS Freshmen D.J. Wellons and Evan Davis are vying to replace Jameson Vest, Toledo's all-time leading placekicker. The punting job belongs to Australian Bailey Flint, who averaged 40.9 yards last season with eight kicks of at least 50 yards.

FINAL ANALYSIS The Rockets are one of the MAC's most successful programs, posting a winning record in nine straight seasons and playing in eight bowl games during that stretch.

Candle has enough experience at quarterback, running back and along the offensive line to field a very productive scoring unit — if he finds a playmaker or two at wide receiver. In order for Toledo to again be a title contender, the defense will need to improve significantly after a poor showing in 2018.

Matchups with Kentucky, Colorado State and BYU all come in the first month, so the Rockets will have to weather that stretch before making their case as a MAC title contender.

Bryant Koback

"They're going to kill you on explosive plays. They can stretch it, and those running backs are really, really solid. Just a really good-looking team."

— An opposing MAC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (8)			Returning Starters in Bold		
WR	8	Andrew Davis (Sr.)		80	Bryce Mitchell (Jr.)
WR	4	**Danzel McKinley-Lewis (Sr.)**		15	Neru N'Shaka (Jr.)
WR	10	**Desmond Phillips (Sr.)**		88	Darius Corbett (So.)
LT	58	**Cameron Bell (Sr.)**		68	Mitchell Berg (So.)
LG	64	Joshua Fenn (Jr.)		65	Luke Doerger (Jr.)
C	72	**Bryce Harris (Sr.)**		65	Luke Doerger (Jr.)
RG	78	**Yazeed Atariwa (Sr.)**		57	Brandon Heidecker (Sr.)
RT	74	Lavel Dumont (Fr.)		61	Kelvin Ateman (So.)
TE	14	**Reggie Gilliam (Sr.)**		89	Drew Rosi (Jr.)
QB	6	**Mitchell Guadagni (Sr.)**		12	Eli Peters (Jr.)
RB	22	Bryant Koback (So.)		21	**Shakif Seymour (Jr.)**
DEFENSE (5)					
DE	95	Willie Ross Jr. (Sr.)		87	Terrance Taylor (So.)
DT	53	Devonté Dunn (So.)		52	Derrius Mullins (So.)
DT	93	**Nate Childress (Sr.)**		96	David Hood (Jr.)
DE	91	**Jamal Hines (So.)**		85	Desjuan Johnson (So.)
LB	2	Jordan Fisher (Sr.)		9	Evander Craft (Sr.)
LB	43	Erik Davis (Sr.)		45	Dyontae Johnson (So.)
STAR	21	**DeDarallo Blue (Sr.)**		20	Saeed Holt (So.)
CB	24	**Justin Clark (Jr.)**		19	Samuel Womack (Jr.)
CB	36	Desmond Bernard (So.)		12	DeAmonte King (So.)
S	27	**Kahlil Robinson (Sr.)**		38	Zachary Ford (So.)
S	15	Tycen Anderson (Jr.)		26	Caleb Sutherland (Fr.)
SPECIAL TEAMS					
K		Evan Davis (Fr.)	KR	5	Ronnie Jones (Sr.)
P	49	Bailey Flint (Jr.)	PR	4	Danzel McKinley-Lewis (Sr.)

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Eli Peters, 265-146-1,837-7, 18 TDs
Rushing: Bryant Koback, 153 att., 917 yds., 14 TDs
Receiving: Desmond Phillips, 27 rec., 220 yds., 0 TDs
Tackles: Kahlil Robinson, 69
Sacks: Jamal Hines, 3.0
Interceptions: Zachary Ford, Jamal Hines, 2

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Jason Candle
Record at School: 28-13 (3+ years)
Career Record: 28-13 (3+ years)
Offensive Coordinator: Brian Wright
Defensive Coordinator: Brian George
Toledo, OH • Glass Bowl (26,248)

Toledo Athletics

Western Michigan **Broncos**

National Forecast: **87** • MAC West Prediction: **2** • Projected Record: **8-4, 6-2 MAC**

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	Monmouth
Sept.	7	at Michigan State
Sept.	14	Georgia State
Sept.	21	at Syracuse
Sept.	28	Central Michigan
Oct.	5	at Toledo
Oct.	12	Miami (Ohio)
Oct.	19	at Eastern Michigan
Oct.	26	Bowling Green
Nov.	5	Ball State
Nov.	12	at Ohio
Nov.	26	at Northern Illinois

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 7-6, 5-3 MAC

Aug.	31	Syracuse	L	42-55
Sept.	8	at Michigan	L	3-49
Sept.	15	Delaware State	W	68-0
Sept.	22	at Georgia State	W	34-15
Sept.	29	at Miami (Ohio)	W	40-39
Oct.	6	Eastern Michigan	W	27-24
Oct.	13	at Bowling Green	W	42-35
Oct.	20	at Central Michigan	W	35-10
Oct.	25	Toledo	L	24-51
Nov.	1	Ohio	L	14-59
Nov.	13	at Ball State (ot)	L	41-42
Nov.	20	Northern Illinois	W	28-21
Dec.	21	vs. BYU #	L	18-49

#Idaho Potato Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Cameron Coleman, WR, St. Louis, MO
2. Joey Price, OT, Algonquin, IL
3. Damari Roberson, ATH, Muskegon, MI
4. Marshawn Foster, WR, Chicago, IL
5. Sean Tyler, RB, Rickton Park, IL
6. Boone Bonnema, LB, Zeeland, MI
7. Nick Kargman, QB, Camden, NJ
8. Calob Dalton, LB, Carrollton, OH
9. Christian Singleton, RB, Kennesaw, GA
10. Jack Sherwin, TE, Traverse City, MI

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	MAC	NATIONAL
Scoring	32.0 ppg	4	39
Rushing	199.5 ypg	3	38
Passing	237.4 ypg	3	63
Total	436.8 ypg	3	35
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**MAC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	34.5 ppg	10	106
Rushing	165.8 ypg	5	68
Passing	220.8 ypg	8	59
Total	386.6 ypg	6	57
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**MAC**	**NATIONAL**
+1	+0.08	6	57

STAT CORNER

11.4

How much was a healthy Jon Wassink worth? About 11.4 points per game — WMU averaged 36.4 with him and 25.0 without him.

OFFENSE The Broncos return many of their offensive playmakers, highlighted by their top three pass catchers in receivers Jayden Reed (56 receptions, 797 yards, eight TDs) and D'Wayne Eskridge and tight end Giovanni Ricci.

The receiving corps will be bolstered by a healthy Jon Wassink at quarterback. He helped Western Michigan to a 6–2 start before getting injured against Toledo a week after rushing for three TDs in a win over Central Michigan. If Wassink (151-for-245, 1,994 yards, 16 TDs, six INTs) were to miss time again, the good news is that the Broncos now have experienced backups in Kaleb Eleby and Illinois transfer Alex Mussat.

Additionally, WMU brings back a veteran running back in LeVante Bellamy, who shared carries the last couple of seasons and rushed for 1,228 yards and six touchdowns on 205 totes in 2018 to earn first-team All-MAC honors. Expect his touches to increase this year as a bell cow of the offense.

Throw in a veteran offensive line, and the Broncos are brimming with possibilities after scoring 32.0 points per game last year. Luke Juriga was first-team All-MAC at guard in 2018 but will shift over to center as as senior.

DEFENSE It's a group loaded with experience but also in need of improvement after finishing 10th in the MAC in scoring defense in 2018.

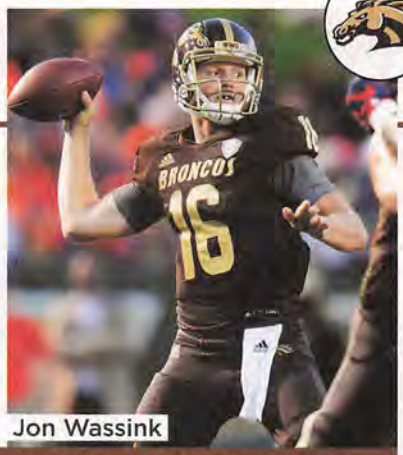
The secondary returns a pair of cornerbacks in converted safety Stefan Claiborne (56 tackles, four pass breakups) and Anton Curtis who have the experience but still need to prove themselves over an entire season. Eskridge, a starting wideout, saw significant time at corner in the spring as well.

The 2018 defense was aggressive up front — the Broncos posted the 28th-most tackles for a loss in the nation — but WMU also was gashed repeatedly, in part due to always being in attack mode.

Western Michigan has trustworthy defensive linemen led by ends Ali Fayad and Antonio Balabani, who combined for 18 tackles for a loss and nine sacks. At linebacker, the Broncos return their two top tacklers in Drake Spears and Alex Grace (169 combined tackles).

SPECIALISTS The Broncos have a settled kicking situation with Gavin Peddie after he made 10-of-13 field goals in 2018, including both of his tries beyond 40 yards — although he did miss three attempts from 39 yards and in. More should be expected from punter Nick Mihalic (37.3 yards per punt), and since he is the only punter on the roster, WMU seems convinced that he's the man for the job. Reed and Tyron Arnett are both back as punt returners after each scoring a touchdown in that department last year.

FINAL ANALYSIS The Broncos return as much production on both sides of the football as any FBS team in the country, giving them high hopes to win the MAC. Coach Tim Lester has been recruiting well enough to continue what now-Minnesota coach P.J. Fleck had started in turning WMU into a mid-major destination spot for three-star recruits (and even the occasional four-star). The Broncos are in a good spot right now in terms of veterans and underclassmen ready to burst onto the scene. Wassink showed enough potential under center last season to expect a banner year with him healthy.



Jon Wassink

"They're still really talented. They're still working with the recruiting from P.J. (Fleck), and it shows in the skill positions. They could win the conference."

— An opposing MAC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (8) — Returning Starters in Bold

WR	**87**	**Jayden Reed (So.)**	8	Tyron Arnett (Jr.)
WR	**7**	**D'Wayne Eskridge (Sr.)**		Cortez Lewis (Sr.)
WR	11	Jaylen Hall (So.)	83	Luke Sanders (Jr.)
LT	**76**	**Jaylon Moore (Jr.)**	72	Dylan Deatherage (So.)
LG	**61**	**Mike Caliendo (Jr.)**	73	Mohamed Elazazy (So.)
C	**59**	**Luke Juriga (Sr.)**	65	Trevor Campbell (So.)
RG	62	Alex Keys (Sr.)	51	Jordan Asbury (Jr.)
RT	70	Spencer Kanz (Jr.)	**60**	**Mark Brooks (Jr.)**
TE	15	Giovanni Ricci (Sr.)	89	Brett Borske (Jr.)
QB	**16**	**Jon Wassink (Sr.)**	5	Kaleb Eleby (So.)
RB	**2**	**LeVante Bellamy (Sr.)**	28	Chase Brown (So.)

DEFENSE (10)

DE	**58**	**Antonio Balabani (Sr.)**	5	Andre Carter (Fr.)
DT	**8**	**Ralph Holley (Jr.)**	68	Jamal Williams (Sr.)
NT	66	Wesley French (Sr.)	90	Ken Aguirre (Jr.)
DE	**1**	**Ali Fayad (Jr.)**	98	Kaitlen Guillory (Jr.)
OLB	**34**	**Alex Grace (Sr.)**	**7**	**Najee Clayton (Sr.)**
MLB	**56**	**Corvin Moment (So.)**	23	Treshaun Hayward (Jr.)
OLB	**20**	**Drake Spears (Sr.)**	42	Roy McCree (So.)
CB	**21**	**Stefan Claiborne (Sr.)**	7	D'Wayne Eskridge (Sr.)
CB	3	Anton Curtis (Sr.)	18	Ginial Isma (So.)
FS	**6**	**A.J. Thomas (Jr.)**	17	Zaire Barnes (So.)
SS	**2**	**Justin Tranquill (Sr.)**	13	Harrison Taylor (So.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	47	Gavin Peddie (So.)	**KR**	28	Chase Brown (So.)
P	1	Nick Mihalic (So.)	**PR**	87	Jayden Reed (So.)

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Jon Wassink, 245-151-1,994-6, 16 TDs
Rushing: LeVante Bellamy, 205 att., 1,228 yds., 6 TDs
Receiving: Jayden Reed, 56 rec., 797 yds., 8 TDs
Tackles: Drake Spears, 86
Sacks: Ali Fayad, 7.5
Interceptions: Anton Curtis, 2

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Tim Lester
Record at School: 13-12 (2 years)
Career Record: 43-35 (8 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Jake Moreland
Defensive Coordinator: Lou Esposito
Kalamazoo, MI • Waldo Stadium (30,200)

Western Michigan Athletics

Mountain West *Preview*

Mountain	*Predicted Order of Finish*	West

	Mountain	West
1	*Boise State* **BRONCOS** 11-2, 7-1 MW	*Fresno State* **BULLDOGS** 8-5, 6-2 MW
2	*Utah State* **AGGIES** 8-4, 7-1 MW	*San Diego State* **AZTECS** 8-4, 6-2 MW
3	*Air Force* **FALCONS** 7-5, 4-4 MW	*Hawaii* **RAINBOW WARRIORS** 7-6, 5-3 MW
4	*Wyoming* **COWBOYS** 6-6, 3-5 MW	*Nevada* **WOLF PACK** 5-7, 3-5 MW
5	*Colorado State* **RAMS** 4-8, 3-5 MW	*UNLV* **REBELS** 4-8, 2-6 MW
6	*New Mexico* **LOBOS** 3-9, 1-7 MW	*San Jose State* **SPARTANS** 2-10, 1-7 MW

Mountain West Championship: **Boise State over Fresno State**

Games to Watch

AUG. 30
COLORADO ST. VS. COLORADO
This annual Week 1 showdown in Denver is a nice barometer for both programs. Colorado has won four straight and five of the past six.

AUG. 31
BOISE STATE VS. FLORIDA STATE
Boise State — with its new starting QB — travels to Jacksonville to face the Seminoles. It's the first-ever matchup between the two schools.

AUG. 31
MISSOURI AT WYOMING
The last SEC team that ventured into Mountain West territory returned home with a loss — Arkansas at Colorado State last September.

AUG. 31
FRESNO STATE AT USC
Fresno State went 2–0 vs. Pac-12 teams in 2018, winning at UCLA in Week 3 and knocking off Arizona State in the Las Vegas Bowl.

SEPT. 7
SDSU AT UCLA
This should be an intriguing battle between two of the game's finest tacticians — Chip Kelly (on offense) and Rocky Long (on defense).

SEPT. 21
AIR FORCE AT BOISE STATE
Air Force is eager to prove it's back on track. This late-September trip to Boise will let us know if the Falcons can be a contender.

Boise State Athletics; San Diego State Athletics

2019 Unit Rankings

	QB	RB	WR/TE	OL	DL	LB	DB
AIR FORCE	6	6	12	2	6	9	8
BOISE STATE	4	3	1	1	1	2	2
COLORADO STATE	5	8	4	11	7	12	9
FRESNO STATE	9	2	8	6	3	4	1
HAWAII	2	12	3	5	5	7	7
NEVADA	11	4	2	9	4	6	6
NEW MEXICO	10	11	9	8	9	10	11
SAN DIEGO STATE	8	1	11	4	10	3	3
SAN JOSE STATE	12	9	10	12	12	8	12
UNLV	3	7	5	3	11	11	10
UTAH STATE	1	5	6	7	2	1	4
WYOMING	7	10	7	10	8	5	5

Recruiting by School

1. Boise State
2. Colorado State
3. Fresno State
4. Utah State
5. Nevada
6. San Diego State
7. Wyoming
8. Air Force
9. UNLV
10. New Mexico
11. San Jose State
12. Hawaii

Curtis Weaver, Boise State

2019 Bowl Projections

Las Vegas Bowl: Boise State vs. Stanford

Frisco Bowl: Utah State vs. Army

New Mexico Bowl: Fresno State vs. UAB

Famous Idaho Potato Bowl: San Diego State vs. Buffalo

Armed Forces Bowl: Air Force vs. Purdue

Arizona Bowl: Hawaii vs. Louisiana

Juwan Washington, San Diego State

MW Coordinator Carousel

Boise State: Offense
New: Zak Hill, Eric Kiesau
Old: Zak Hill

Boise State: Defense
New: Spencer Danielson, Jeff Schmedding
Old: Andy Avalos

Fresno State: Offense
New: Ryan Grubb
Old: Kalen DeBoer

New Mexico: Offense
New: Joe Dailey
Old: Calvin Magee

New Mexico: Defense
New: Jordan Peterson
Old: Kevin Cosgrove

Utah State: Offense
New: Mike Sanford
Old: David Yost

Utah State: Defense
New: Justin Ena
Old: Frank Maile, Keith Patterson

Wyoming: Defense
New: Jake Dickert
Old: Scottie Hazelton

SEPT. 21
UTAH STATE AT SDSU
It's the first conference game for Gary Andersen in his second stint at Utah State. Aggie QB Jordan Love will test the Aztecs' defense.

NOV. 2
FRESNO STATE AT HAWAII
This trip to Honolulu begins a tough stretch for the Bulldogs, who host Utah State and then visit San Diego State the next two weeks.

NOV. 9
UTAH STATE AT FRESNO STATE
Utah State has won two straight in this series — but the two schools have not played since Jeff Tedford returned to Fresno State.

NOV. 16
FRESNO STATE AT SDSU
These two teams have dominated the West since the league split into two divisions. Fresno State has won the last two matchups.

NOV. 23
BOISE STATE AT UTAH STATE
The Mountain Division championship likely will be on the line when the Broncos visit Logan on Thanksgiving weekend.

NOV. 30
UNLV AT NEVADA
Tony Sanchez is under pressure at UNLV. His job could be on the line when these two programs meet in Reno in the regular-season finale.

Cole McDonald, Hawaii

MW Returning Leaders

Passing	ATT	COMP	PCT	YDS	TD	INT	AVG/G
Cole McDonald, Hawaii	484	285	58.9	3,875	36	10	298.1
Jordan Love, Utah State	417	267	64.0	3,567	32	6	274.4
Collin Hill, Colorado State	202	119	58.9	1,387	7	7	138.7

Rushing	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD	LONG	AVG/G
Cole Fagan, Air Force	185	997	5.4	7	56	83.1
Gerold Bright, Utah State	141	888	6.3	10	70	68.3
Ronnie Rivers, Fresno State	132	743	5.6	10	34	67.6

Receiving	REC	YDS	AVG	TD	LONG	AVG/G
Tre Walker, San Jose State	39	714	18.3	5	75	79.3
Cedric Byrd II, Hawaii	79	970	12.3	9	55	69.3
JoJo Ward, Hawaii	51	865	17.0	9	75	61.8

Tackles: David Woodward, Utah State (134), Kyahva Tezino, San Diego State (127)
Sacks: Tipa Galeai, Utah State (10.5), Curtis Weaver, Boise State (9.5)
Interceptions: Javin White, UNLV (4), DJ Williams, Utah State (4), Juju Hughes, Fresno State (4)

2018 MW Standings

MOUNTAIN	MW	OVERALL	WEST	MW	OVERALL
Boise State	7-1	10-3	Fresno State	7-1	12-2
Utah State	7-1	11-2	Nevada	5-3	8-5
Wyoming	4-4	6-6	Hawaii	5-3	8-6
Air Force	3-5	5-7	San Diego State	4-4	7-6
Colorado State	2-6	3-9	UNLV	2-6	4-8
New Mexico	1-7	3-9	San Jose State	1-7	1-11

2018 Bowl Results

Frisco Bowl: Ohio 27, San Diego State 0

Hawaii Bowl: Louisiana Tech 31, Hawaii 14

Arizona Bowl: Nevada 16, Arkansas State 13 (OT)

New Mexico Bowl: Utah State 52, North Texas 13

Las Vegas Bowl: Fresno State 31, Arizona State 20

First Responder Bowl: Boston College vs. Boise State (Canceled)

2018 MW Team Stats & Rankings

Offense

	SCORING	RUSH	PASS	TOTAL
Air Force	30.3 (6)	283.5 (1)	131.3 (11T)	414.8 (6)
Boise State	35.4 (2)	167.5 (5)	292.0 (4)	459.5 (2)
Colorado State	22.8 (9)	105.6 (11)	304.9 (2)	410.5 (7)
Fresno State	34.6 (3)	154.4 (7)	267.1 (6)	421.5 (4)
Hawaii	30.8 (5)	109.6 (10)	310.3 (1)	419.9 (5)
Nevada	31.1 (4)	152.0 (9)	278.8 (5)	430.8 (3)
New Mexico	26.6 (8)	153.2 (8)	176.8 (9)	330.0 (11)
San Diego State	20.6 (12)	161.7 (6)	187.2 (8)	348.8 (9)
San Jose State	21.3 (10)	61.5 (12)	262.2 (7)	323.7 (12)
UNLV	28.8 (7)	224.3 (2)	166.8 (10)	391.2 (8)
Utah State	47.5 (1)	203.2 (3)	294.2 (3)	497.4 (1)
Wyoming	20.7 (11)	199.4 (4)	131.3 (11T)	330.8 (10)

Defense

	SCORING	RUSH	PASS	TOTAL
Air Force	25.8 (6)	116.9 (2)	244.0 (8)	360.9 (5)
Boise State	22.1 (3)	122.9 (3)	233.0 (5)	355.9 (4)
Colorado State	36.8 (11)	219.5 (12)	232.0 (4)	451.5 (9)
Fresno State	14.1 (1)	132.2 (5)	189.4 (1)	321.6 (1)
Hawaii	35.1 (8)	204.6 (9)	235.1 (6)	439.7 (8)
Nevada	26.9 (7)	142.0 (6)	245.5 (9)	387.5 (7)
New Mexico	36.2 (9)	217.0 (11)	256.0 (10)	473.0 (11)
San Diego State	22.2 (4)	103.8 (1)	230.8 (3)	334.6 (3)
San Jose State	36.6 (10)	211.2 (10)	283.9 (12)	495.1 (12)
UNLV	37.3 (12)	186.6 (8)	267.6 (11)	454.2 (10)
Utah State	22.2 (5)	143.0 (7)	236.5 (7)	379.5 (6)
Wyoming	22.0 (2)	129.5 (4)	196.7 (2)	326.2 (2)

ALL-MW TEAM

First-Team Offense

QB	**Jordan Love**	6-4	220	Jr.	Utah State
RB	**Toa Taua**	5-8	220	So.	Nevada
RB	**Juwan Washington**	5-7	190	Sr.	San Diego State
AP	**Gerold Bright**	5-10	190	Sr.	Utah State
WR	**Cedric Byrd II**	5-9	175	Sr.	Hawaii
WR	**John Hightower**	6-2	183	Sr.	Boise State
TE	**Jared Rice**	6-5	238	Sr.	Fresno State
C	**Keith Ismael**	6-3	310	Jr.	San Diego State
OL	**Ezra Cleveland**	6-6	311	Jr.	Boise State
OL	**John Molchon**	6-5	322	Sr.	Boise State
OL	**Justin Polu**	6-4	330	Sr.	UNLV
OL	**Jake Nelson**	6-4	300	Sr.	Nevada

Jordan Love, Utah State

Jaron Bryant, Fresno State

First-Team Defense

DL	**Tipa Galeai**	6-5	230	Sr.	Utah State
DL	**Jordan Jackson**	6-5	270	Jr.	Air Force
DL	**Kaimana Padello**	6-0	215	Sr.	Hawaii
DL	**Curtis Weaver**	6-3	264	Jr.	Boise State
LB	**Kyahva Tezino**	6-0	230	Sr.	San Diego State
LB	**Mykal Walker**	6-3	227	Sr.	Fresno State
LB	**David Woodward**	6-2	230	Jr.	Utah State
CB	**Jaron Bryant**	6-1	183	Sr.	Fresno State
CB	**DJ Williams**	5-9	180	Sr.	Utah State
S	**Juju Hughes**	5-11	188	Sr.	Fresno State
S	**Tariq Thompson**	6-0	200	Jr.	San Diego State

First-Team Specialists

K	**Cooper Rothe**	5-11	178	Sr.	Wyoming
P	**Ryan Stonehouse**	5-11	170	Jr.	Colorado State
KR	**Savon Scarver**	5-11	190	Jr.	Utah State
PR	**Jordan Nathan**	5-9	180	Jr.	Utah State

SECOND-TEAM OFFENSE

QB	**Cole McDonald**	6-4	220	Jr.	Hawaii
RB	**Cole Fagan**	6-1	230	Sr.	Air Force
RB	**Charles Williams**	5-9	185	Jr.	UNLV
AP	**Ronnie Rivers**	5-8	179	Jr.	Fresno State
WR	**Warren Jackson**	6-6	219	Jr.	Colorado State
WR	**JoJo Ward**	5-9	175	Sr.	Hawaii
TE	**Cameron Butler**	6-2	238	Jr.	Colorado State
C	**Garrett Larson**	6-4	302	Sr.	Boise State
OL	**Alfred Edwards**	6-7	310	So.	Utah State
OL	**Scott Hattok**	6-5	280	Sr.	Air Force
OL	**Netane Muti**	6-3	308	Jr.	Fresno State
OL	**Solo Vaipulu**	6-2	310	So.	Hawaii

SECOND-TEAM DEFENSE

DL	**Jasad Haynes**	6-1	283	Sr.	Fresno State
DL	**Sonatane Lui**	6-1	287	Sr.	Boise State
DL	**David Moa**	6-3	305	Sr.	Boise State
DL	**Dom Peterson**	6-0	315	So.	Nevada
LB	**Ethan Aguayo**	6-2	220	Sr.	San Jose State
LB	**Penei Pavihi**	6-3	245	Jr.	Hawaii
LB	**Logan Wilson**	6-2	250	Sr.	Wyoming
CB	**Daniel Brown**	5-11	185	Sr.	Nevada
CB	**Avery Williams**	5-9	193	Jr.	Boise State
S	**Jeremy Fejedelem**	5-10	185	Sr.	Air Force
S	**Kekaula Kaniho**	5-10	185	Jr.	Boise State

SECOND-TEAM SPECIALISTS

K	**Dominik Eberle**	6-2	195	Sr.	Utah State
P	**Blake Cusick**	6-2	187	Sr.	Fresno State
KR	**John Hightower**	6-2	183	Sr.	Boise State
PR	**Austin Conway**	5-10	183	Sr.	Wyoming

Cole Fagan
Air Force

Ronnie Rivers
Fresno State

Warren Jackson
Colorado State

Logan Wilson
Wyoming

THIRD-TEAM OFFENSE

QB	**Armani Rogers**	6-5	225	Jr.	UNLV
RB	**Tyler Nevens**	6-0	226	Jr.	San Jose State
RB	**Xazavian Valladay**	6-0	196	So.	Wyoming
AP	**Jordan Nathan**	5-9	180	Jr.	Utah State
WR	**Tre Walker**	5-11	175	Jr.	San Jose State
WR	**Romeo Doubs**	6-2	195	So.	Nevada
TE	**Marcus Williams**	6-3	205	Jr.	New Mexico
C	**Keegan Cryder**	6-4	297	So.	Wyoming
OL	**Teton Saltes**	6-6	284	Jr.	New Mexico
OL	**Syrus Tuitele**	6-6	300	Jr.	Fresno State
OL	**Eric Quevedo**	6-4	317	Sr.	Boise State
OL	**Daishawn Dixon**	6-5	320	Sr.	San Diego State

THIRD-TEAM DEFENSE

DL	**Aaron Blackwell**	6-3	288	Sr.	New Mexico
DL	**Cade Hall**	6-2	250	So.	San Jose State
DL	**Gabe McCoy**	6-2	220	Sr.	UNLV
DL	**Christopher 'Unga**	6-0	300	Sr.	Utah State
LB	**Jesse Osuna**	6-0	223	Sr.	San Jose State
LB	**Gabriel Sewell**	6-0	250	Sr.	Nevada
LB	**Javin White**	6-3	205	Sr.	UNLV
CB	**Darren Hall**	6-0	170	So.	San Diego State
CB	**Tyler Hall**	5-10	190	Sr.	Wyoming
S	**Kekoa Nawahine**	6-2	208	Sr.	Boise State
S	**DeAndre Pierce**	5-11	180	Jr.	Boise State

THIRD-TEAM SPECIALISTS

K	**Ryan Meskell**	6-0	185	Sr.	Hawaii
P	**Tyson Dyer**	6-2	198	Jr.	New Mexico
KR	**Juwan Washington**	5-7	190	Sr.	San Diego State
PR	**Avery Williams**	5-9	193	Jr.	Boise State

Hawaii Athletics; Fresno State Athletics; Utah State Athletics; Air Force Athletics; CSU Athletics; Wyoming Athletics

Air Force **Falcons**

National Forecast: **84** • MW Mountain Prediction: **3** • Projected Record: **7-5, 4-4 MW**

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	Colgate
Sept.	14	at Colorado
Sept.	21	at Boise State
Sept.	28	San Jose State
Oct.	5	at Navy
Oct.	12	Fresno State
Oct.	19	at Hawaii
Oct.	26	Utah State
Nov.	2	Army
Nov.	9	at New Mexico
Nov.	16	at Colorado State
Nov.	30	Wyoming

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 5-7, 3-5 MW

Sept.	1	Stony Brook	W	38-0
Sept.	8	at Florida Atlantic	L	27-33
Sept.	22	at Utah State	L	32-42
Sept.	29	Nevada	L	25-28
Oct.	6	Navy	W	35-7
Oct.	12	at San Diego State	L	17-21
Oct.	19	at UNLV	W	41-35
Oct.	27	Boise State	L	38-48
Nov.	3	at Army	L	14-17
Nov.	10	New Mexico	W	42-24
Nov.	17	at Wyoming	L	27-35
Nov.	22	Colorado State	W	27-19

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Nate Polk, S, Scottsdale, AZ
2. Tre'shon Devones, CB, Duncanville, TX
3. Kyle Patterson, TE, Gilbert, AZ
4. Demetris Dorceus, DE, Fort Lauderdale, FL
5. Nathan Peterson, OG, Dixon, CA
6. Kaymen St. Junious, S, Pearland, TX
7. Trey Taylor, S, Frisco, TX
8. Deavyn Woullard, WR, Mission Viejo, CA
9. Desmond Dorceus, DE, Fort Lauderdale, FL
10. Malik Scurlock, DE, Los Angeles, CA

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	MW	NATIONAL
Scoring	30.3 ppg	6	55
Rushing	283.5 ypg	1	3
Passing	131.3 ypg	11	125
Total	414.8 ypg	6	53
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**MW**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	25.8 ppg	6	56
Rushing	116.9 ypg	2	16
Passing	244.0 ypg	8	84
Total	360.9 ypg	5	43
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**MW**	**NATIONAL**
-1	-0.08	7	73

STAT CORNER

38

Run defense was not one of Air Force's problems. The Falcons allowed 4.0 or more yards on only 38% of carries, third in FBS.

OFFENSE Donald Hammond III is a dynamic, powerful and confident quarterback. After a loss to Army last season, he guaranteed that the Falcons would defeat the Black Knights in 2019. But he's more than just a talker — he has the talent to revive a broken program.

He needs to stay healthy, though. The last Air Force quarterback to start every game was Connor Dietz, in 2012. Since then, injuries have plagued quarterbacks and drained the Air Force offense. Hammond leads the battle to start, but senior Isaiah Sanders will offer strong competition.

In recent seasons, the quarterbacks have been the most talented ball carriers and have shown a reluctance to pitch or hand off the ball. The Falcons again lack superior talent at running back, which limits the offense. The attack hums when quarterbacks have elusive, powerful runners to share the load.

Cole Fagan, Kadin Remsberg and Taven Birdow lead the running backs. A dangerous weapon needs to emerge from the pack to transform the offense. Halfback Joseph Saucier, a capable return man, was dismissed in the offseason and will be missed.

Geraud Sanders is the leading candidate to replace Marcus Bennett as the top deep threat. When defenses jam the middle to stop the Falcons rushing offense, Sanders must make them pay.

Four starters return from a line that powered the nation's third-best rushing offense. The undersized yet athletic line should be the team's strength.

DEFENSE Jordan Jackson anchors a line that was rugged against the run but struggled to pressure passers. The Falcons need Jackson to rampage into the pocket to hassle quarterbacks. Nose guard Mosese Fifita is the rare Air Force lineman who weighs over 300 pounds. His aggression last season helped toughen the Falcons against the run.

Kyle Johnson brings a defiant attitude and big-hitting ways to linebacker. He needs to become a more effective blitz threat.

Strong safety Garrett Kauppila can become an offense-disrupting star, if he remains healthy. He's in the mold of former star Weston Steelhammer, blending the vicious nature of a linebacker with the speed of a defensive back. Free safety Jeremy Fejedelem will combine with Kauppila to form one of the Mountain West's top safety tandems.

SPECIALISTS Jake Koehnke is a functional punter and placekicker. Coach Troy Calhoun wants him to add more height to his punts, and he needs to improve his power on field goals. He missed 4-of-5 kicks from more than 40 yards. Remsberg, the fastest player on the team, will replace Saucier as kickoff returner.

FINAL ANALYSIS The Falcons crawled to four FBS victories in 2018, and those opponents — Colorado State, New Mexico, UNLV and Navy — lost 36 of 49 games. Calhoun is an offensive specialist, but predictable play calling doomed the Falcons in losses at Army and Wyoming, the most painful defeats of 2018. He must again find his nerve and imagination. The defense must make a jump, too. The 2018 Falcons offense averaged 30.3 points per game, which should have been enough for a winning record.

Calhoun has revived the team before. In 2013, the Falcons crashed to 2–10. In the next three seasons, they soared to 28 wins.

Cole Fagan

"The kids there don't back off ever, and they seem to play better against the best teams in the league. They make you play on their terms."

— An opposing MW assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (7)				Returning Starters in Bold
WR	7	Geraud Sanders (Sr.)	6	David Cormier (So.)
WR	26	Brandon Lewis (So.)	27	Ben Peterson (Jr.)
LT	**77**	**Parker Ferguson (Jr.)**	69	Wolfgang Rehbock (Sr.)
LG	**66**	**Nolan Laufenberg (Jr.)**	74	Isaac Cochran (So.)
C	**72**	**Connor Vikupitz (Sr.)**	68	Christopher Mitchell (Sr.)
RG	75	Colin Marquez (Sr.)	64	Kyle Krepsz (Jr.)
RT	**61**	**Scott Hattok (Sr.)**	60	Adam Jewell (Jr.)
TE	**87**	**Kade Waguespack (Sr.)**	81	Lesley Dalger (Sr.)
QB	5	Donald Hammond III (Jr.)	4	Isaiah Sanders (Sr.)
TB	**24**	**Kadin Remsberg (Jr.)**	19	Nolan Eriksen (Sr.)
FB	**34**	**Cole Fagan (Sr.)**	33	Taven Birdow (Sr.)
DEFENSE (7)				
DL	91	Jared Bair (Sr.)	92	Nokoa Pauole (So.)
NG	99	**Mosese Fifita (Sr.)**	98	Kyler Ehm (Sr.)
DE	**94**	**Jordan Jackson (Jr.)**	86	Michael Purcell (Jr.)
OLB	**8**	**Lakota Wills (Jr.)**	5	Brandon Gooding (So.)
OLB	30	Grant Donaldson (Jr.)	26	Vince Sanford (So.)
LB	**40**	**Kyle Johnson (Sr.)**	37	Thadius Blackmon (So.)
LB	38	Demonte Meeks (Jr.)	35	Christopher Musselman (Sr.)
CB	4	Milton Bugg III (Jr.)	2	David Eure (So.)
CB	**6**	**Zane Lewis (Sr.)**	23	Elisha Palm (Jr.)
SS	**22**	**Garrett Kauppila (Sr.)**	14	Grant Theil (Sr.)
FS	**2**	**Jeremy Fejedelem (Sr.)**	4	James Jones IV (Sr.)
SPECIAL TEAMS				
K	92	Jake Koehnke (Sr.)	**KR**	24 Kadin Remsberg (Jr.)
P	92	Jake Koehnke (Sr.)	**PR**	26 Brandon Lewis (So.)

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Isaiah Sanders, 78-48-844-3, 4 TDs
Rushing: Cole Fagan, 185 att., 997 yds., 7 TDs
Receiving: Geraud Sanders, 14 rec., 236 yds., 0 TDs
Tackles: Jeremy Fejedelem, 104
Sacks: Jordan Jackson, 4.5
Interceptions: Jeremy Fejedelem, 3

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Troy Calhoun
Record at School: 87-67 (12 years)
Career Record: 87-67 (12 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Mike Thiessen
Defensive Coordinator: John Rudzinski
Colorado Springs, CO • Falcon Stadium (46,692)

Air Force Athletics

Boise State **Broncos**

National Forecast: **29** • MW Mountain Prediction: **1** • Projected Record: **11-2, 7-1 MW**

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	vs. Florida State #
Sept.	5	Marshall
Sept.	14	Portland State
Sept.	21	Air Force
Oct.	5	at UNLV
Oct.	12	Hawaii
Oct.	19	at BYU
Nov.	2	at San Jose State
Nov.	9	Wyoming
Nov.	16	New Mexico
Nov.	23	at Utah State
Nov.	30	at Colorado State

#Jacksonville

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 10-3, 7-1 MW

Sept.	1	at Troy	W	56-20
Sept.	8	Connecticut	W	62-7
Sept.	15	at Oklahoma State	L	21-44
Sept.	29	at Wyoming	W	34-14
Oct.	6	San Diego State	L	13-19
Oct.	13	at Nevada	W	31-27
Oct.	19	Colorado State	W	56-28
Oct.	27	at Air Force	W	48-38
Nov.	3	BYU	W	21-16
Nov.	9	Fresno State	W	24-17
Nov.	16	at New Mexico	W	45-14
Nov.	24	Utah State	W	33-24
Dec.	1	Fresno State # (ot)	L	16-19
Dec.	26	vs. Boston College %		Canceled

#MW Championship %First Responder Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Hank Bachmeier, QB, Murrieta, CA
2. Casey Kline, LB, Brawley, CA
3. Austin Griffin, TE, Saint George, UT*
4. George Holani, RB, Bellflower, CA
5. Lolani Langi, LB, South Jordan, UT
6. Khyheem Waleed, WR, Queen Creek, AZ
7. JL Skinner, S, San Diego, CA
8. DK Blaylock, WR, New Deal, TX
9. Markel Reed, CB, Temple, TX
10. Keegan Duncan, RB, Declo, ID

*junior college transfer

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	MW	NATIONAL
Scoring	35.4 ppg	2	20
Rushing	167.5 ypg	5	66
Passing	292.0 ypg	4	18
Total	459.5 ypg	2	21
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**MW**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	22.1 ppg	3	30
Rushing	122.9 ypg	3	20
Passing	233.0 ypg	5	70
Total	355.9 ypg	4	39
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**MW**	**NATIONAL**
+11	+0.85	3	10

STAT CORNER

74

Beware of regression to the mean: BSU recovered 74% of all fumbles in 2018, the third-highest recovery rate in FBS.

OFFENSE No question mark is bigger for the Broncos than who will replace four-year starting quarterback Brett Rypien, who departed as the Mountain West's all-time leading passer with 13,578 yards. Five scholarship quarterbacks with a combined 10 career pass attempts were on hand for spring drills. Coach Bryan Harsin doesn't plan on naming a starter until mid-August. Dual-threat sophomore Chase Cord (eight carries, 109 yards in 2018) has the most experience, though he tore his ACL in October. True freshman Hank Bachmeier enrolled early and is one of the most highly touted recruits ever to sign with Boise State.

The new QB will have a deep receiving corps. Khalil Shakir looks primed for a major role after serving as a versatile weapon as a freshman, and John Hightower could be one of the nation's most dangerous big-play threats. He had eight TDs on 39 offensive touches in 2018, six of them on plays of more than 40 yards.

The Broncos also must replace top rusher Alexander Mattison, who left early for the NFL after a sublime finish to his junior season (914 yards in the last six games). A by-committee approach seems likely, possibly ending Boise State's nation-leading run of 10 straight seasons with a 1,000-yard rusher.

A huge benefit for the offense is the return of all five starting offensive linemen. The last two seasons, the unit has struggled early, but after a solid 2018 finish, it should be a strength of the team.

DEFENSE Defensive coordinator Andy Avalos' departure for Oregon will hurt, but a ton of returning veteran experience will help three new defensive coaches get acclimated. Nine defensive players have at least nine starts under their belts.

The interior will be among the most experienced anywhere as tackles Sonatane Lui and David Moa have a combined 46 career starts. Moa, a sixth-year senior who had 8.5 sacks in 2016, will be a welcome re-addition after missing most of last season.

Junior Curtis Weaver, who mans the hybrid Stud position, already has 20.5 career sacks, tied for sixth in school history. The Broncos are shifting to more of a true 3-4 defense this season to further utilize Weaver and his fellow outside linebackers. On the inside, the staff loves sophomore Ezekiel Noa, who had 29 of his 36 tackles in the last four games.

Boise State must replace three-year starting cornerback Tyler Horton. However, the rest of the backfield spots are full of stalwarts, including senior safety Kekoa Nawahine, junior safety DeAndre Pierce and junior nickel Kekaula Kaniho, with 59 starts among the three.

SPECIALISTS More often than not, the Broncos' special teams were horrific, from two blocked punts in one loss (Oklahoma State) to a blocked extra point giving way to an overtime loss in the Mountain West Championship Game. With new coordinators, there has been a renewed focus on improvement, and even with the kicker and punter gone, it probably can't get worse.

FINAL ANALYSIS If the new quarterback can serve as a merely adequate replacement for Rypien, the Broncos should once again be in conference title contention. However, with so many questions on offense, there could be some growing pains. Though some road games are tough, Boise State has enough talent, led by strength on the lines, for a 21st straight year of eight wins or more.

Curtis Weaver

"It's really all about the quarterback here. (Brett) Rypien's gone, and they don't have anyone with real game experience."

— An opposing MW assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

Returning Starters in Bold

OFFENSE (6)				
WR	2	Khalil Shakir (So.)	1	Octavius Evans (Jr.)
WR	6	CT Thomas (Jr.)	81	Akilian Butler (Sr.)
WR	16	John Hightower (Sr.)	82	Stefan Cobbs (Fr.)
LT	**76**	**Ezra Cleveland (Jr.)**	75	Kole Bailey (Jr.)
LG	**77**	**John Molchon (Sr.)**	72	Dallas Holliday (Fr.)
C	**67**	**Garrett Larson (Sr.)**	55	K. Holomalia-Gonzalez (Fr.)
RG	**79**	**Eric Quevedo (Sr.)**	68	Jake Stetz (So.)
RT	**70**	**John Ojukwu (So.)**	73	Nick Crabtree (Jr.)
TE	**85**	**John Bates (Jr.)**	5	Garrett Collingham (Sr.)
QB	10	Chase Cord (So.)	19	Hank Bachmeier (Fr.)
RB	34	Robert Mahone (Jr.)	21	Andrew Van Buren (So.)
DEFENSE (8)				
DE	**93**	**Chase Hatada (Sr.)**	54	Matt Locher (Sr.)
NT	**98**	**Sonatane Lui (Sr.)**	90	Scale Igiehon (So.)
DT	55	David Moa (Sr.)	40	Jabari Watson (Jr.)
OLB	99	**Curtis Weaver (Jr.)**	38	Demitri Washington (Fr.)
WLB	**44**	**Riley Whimpey (Jr.)**	7	Ezekiel Noa (So.)
MLB	25	Benton Wickersham (Jr.)	48	Bruno DeRose (Jr.)
NB	28	**Kekaula Kaniho (Jr.)**	20	Roman Kafentzis (So.)
CB	15	Jalen Walker (Jr.)	13	Marques Evans (So.)
CB	**26**	**Avery Williams (Jr.)**	29	Chris Mitchell (Fr.)
S	**10**	**Kekoa Nawahine (Sr.)**	32	Jordan Happle (Jr.)
S	**4**	**DeAndre Pierce (Jr.)**	21	Tyreque Jones (So.)
SPECIAL TEAMS				
K	46	Joel Velazquez (Jr.)	**KR** 16	John Hightower (Sr.)
P	46	Joel Velazquez (Jr.)	**PR** 26	Avery Williams (Jr.)

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Chase Cord, 9-6-67-1, 1 TD
Rushing: Andrew Van Buren, 34 att., 163 yds., 2 TDs
Receiving: CT Thomas, 41 rec., 535 yds., 3 TDs
Tackles: Kekoa Nawahine, 71
Sacks: Curtis Weaver, 9.5
Interceptions: Curtis Weaver, 9.5

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Bryan Harsin
Record at School: 52-15 (5 years)
Career Record: 59-20 (6 years)
Offensive Coordinators: Zak Hill, Eric Kiesau
Defensive Coordinator: Jeff Schmedding
Boise, ID • Albertsons Stadium (36,387)

Boise State Athletics

Colorado State **Rams**

National Forecast: **100** • MW Mountain Prediction: **5** • Projected Record: **4-8, 3-5 MW**

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	30	vs. Colorado #
Sept.	7	Western Illinois
Sept.	14	at Arkansas
Sept.	21	Toledo
Sept.	28	at Utah State
Oct.	5	San Diego State
Oct.	12	at New Mexico
Oct.	26	at Fresno State
Nov.	2	UNLV
Nov.	16	Air Force
Nov.	23	at Wyoming
Nov.	30	Boise State

#Denver

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 3-9, 2-6 MW

Aug.	25	Hawaii	L	34-43
Aug.	31	vs. Colorado #	L	13-45
Sept.	8	Arkansas	W	34-27
Sept.	15	at Florida	L	10-48
Sept.	22	Illinois State	L	19-35
Oct.	6	at San Jose State	W	42-30
Oct.	13	New Mexico	W	20-18
Oct.	19	at Boise State	L	28-56
Oct.	26	Wyoming	L	21-34
Nov.	10	at Nevada	L	10-49
Nov.	17	Utah State	L	24-29
Nov.	22	at Air Force	L	19-27

#Denver

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Brandon Crossley, CB, Little Elm, TX
2. Ty McCullouch, WR, Moreno Valley, CA
3. Tyreese Jackson, RB, New Iberia, LA
4. Keevan Bailey, CB, Conyers, GA
5. Jaylen Hearst, WR, Keller, TX
6. Kyle Helbig, TE, Broomfield, CO
7. Mohamed Kamara, OLB, Newark, NJ
8. Dante Wright, WR, Navarre, FL
9. Desmond Noel, OG, Cincinnati, OH*
10. Caleb Blake, S, Orlando, FL

*junior college transfer

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	MW	NATIONAL
Scoring	22.8 ppg	9	108
Rushing	105.6 ypg	11	124
Passing	304.9 ypg	2	13
Total	410.5 ypg	7	60
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**MW**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	36.8 ppg	11	117
Rushing	219.5 ypg	12	113
Passing	232.0 ypg	4	68
Total	451.5 ypg	9	111
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**MW**	**NATIONAL**
-10	-0.83	12	120

STAT CORNER

-19.6

CSU's average scoring margin regressed from plus-5.6 to minus-14 in 2018, a 19.6-point shift that was the third worst in FBS.

OFFENSE A healthy Collin Hill at quarterback should help Colorado State get its offense back on track. The junior, who has thrown for 2,483 yards and 15 touchdowns in 15 career games, missed the second half of the 2016 season, all of 2017 and was limited at the start of 2018 while recovering from two ACL tears in his left knee.

He did lose some valuable weapons with the departures of receivers Preston Williams and Olabisi Johnson and running back Izzy Matthews. The Rams should be OK at receiver, with Warren Jackson, a 6'6" junior who caught two touchdown passes at Alabama as a freshman, ready to step into a starring role, and the arrival of Auburn transfer Nate Craig-Myers.

The running game is questionable, with only two scholarship running backs — senior Marvin Kinsey Jr. and junior Marcus McElroy — on the roster for spring drills. Three true freshmen — signees Christian Hunter from Fontana, Calif., and Tyreese Jackson from New Iberia, La., and walk-on Jaylen Thomas, a former Air Force signee — will have a chance to make an immediate impact.

None of that will matter if the Rams can't fix a broken offensive line that handcuffed coach Mike Bobo's play calling last year.

DEFENSE Under new D-coordinator John Jancek, the Rams were among the nation's worst teams in 2018 in pass efficiency defense (No. 126 with a 168.18 rating), scoring defense (No. 117, allowing 36.8 points per game), rushing defense (No. 113 at 219.5 yards per game) and total defense (No. 111 at 451.5 yards per game).

The defensive line showed significant improvement during the course of the season, though, with youngsters Emmanuel Jones, Ellison Hubbard and Devin Phillips and junior college transfer Jan-Phillip Bombek combining for 21.5 tackles for a loss, including 9.5 quarterback sacks.

Linebackers Josh Watson, the leading tackler the past two seasons, and Tre Thomas both were lost to graduation, as were two of the four starters in the secondary. The Rams are counting on veteran Max McDonald, a junior, and sophomores Dequan Jackson and Cam'ron Carter to anchor the defense from their linebacker spots and several youngsters to step up in the secondary, as cornerback Rashad Ajayi did while starting all 12 games last year as a true freshman.

SPECIALISTS Junior Ryan Stonehouse was No. 2 nationally in punting average last year at 48.3 yards per boot. Braxton Davis, a fifth-year senior who handled the Rams' kickoff duties from 2015-17, will handle field goals and extra points as well this year after redshirting in 2018.

FINAL ANALYSIS The Rams took a nosedive to 3–9 last year while Bobo was breaking in six new assistants and undergoing treatment for nerve damage in his feet and right hand at the start of the season. A lack of leadership and accountability plagued the program throughout the season and has been a major point of emphasis in the offseason. There are no quick fixes to cultural problems, and if the Rams struggle again early — a distinct possibility with games against Colorado and at Arkansas in the first three weeks and at Utah State and against San Diego State to open Mountain West play — it could all come crashing down again.

Jamal Hicks

"They were starting to click before (Mike Bobo) got sick. They could be a surprise team if he is healthy. They have solid depth."

— An opposing MW assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

Returning Starters in Bold

OFFENSE (4)				
WR	9	Warren Jackson (Jr.)	3	EJ Scott (So.)
WR		Nate Craig-Myers (Jr.)	80	Nikko Hall (So.)
LT	77	Keith Williams (Jr.)	76	John Blasco Jr. (So.)
LG	**71**	**Jeff Taylor (Sr.)**	56	Ches Jackson (Fr.)
C	64	Scott Brooks (Jr.)	60	Florian McCann (Fr.)
RG	**69**	**Barry Wesley (So.)**	70	Joctavis Phillips (So.)
RT	72	T.J. Storment (Jr.)		Desmond Noel (Jr.)
TE	**16**	**Cameron Butler (Jr.)**	85	Trey McBride (So.)
QB	15	Collin Hill (Jr.)	12	Patrick O'Brien (Jr.)
RB	32	Marcus McElroy (Jr.)	5	Marvin Kinsey Jr. (Sr.)
FB	**46**	**Adam Prentice (Jr.)**	45	Isiah Pannunzio (Jr.)
DEFENSE (6)				
DE	**33**	**Emmanuel Jones (Jr.)**	91	Jan-Phillip Bombek (Sr.)
NG	**94**	**Devin Phillips (So.)**	92	Livingston Paogofie (Jr.)
DT	**98**	**Ellison Hubbard (Jr.)**	**95**	**Richard King (Sr.)**
DE	97	Toby McBride (Jr.)	99	Damion Dickens (Sr.)
SLB	5	Dequan Jackson (So.)	43	Troy Golden (Fr.)
MLB	44	Max McDonald (Jr.)	36	Zach Schlager (Fr.)
WLB	12	Cam'ron Carter (So.)	13	Trey Sutton (Jr.)
CB	**4**	**Rashad Ajayi (So.)**	14	Anthony Hawkins (Sr.)
CB	2	Dajon Owens (Jr.)	6	Malcolm Magee (Fr.)
SS	**7**	**Jamal Hicks (Sr.)**	10	Tywan Francis (So.)
FS	18	Braylin Scott (Sr.)	8	Quinn Brinnon (So.)
SPECIAL TEAMS				
K	83	Braxton Davis (Sr.)	**KR** 32	Marcus McElroy (Jr.)
P	41	Ryan Stonehouse (Jr.)	**PR** 80	Nikko Hall (So.)

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Collin Hill, 202-119-1,387-7, 7 TDs
Rushing: Marvin Kinsey Jr., 63 att., 256 yds., 2 TDs
Receiving: Warren Jackson, 32 rec., 405 yds., 4 TDs
Tackles: Jamal Hicks, 93
Sacks: Ellison Hubbard, 2.5
Interceptions: Rashad Ajayi, Emmanuel Jones, 1

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Mike Bobo
Record at School: 24-27 (4 years)
Career Record: 24-27 (4 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Dave Johnson
Defensive Coordinator: John Jancek
Fort Collins, CO • Canvas Stadium (41,000)

Colorado State Athletics

New Mexico **Lobos**

National Forecast: **113** • MW Mountain Prediction: **6** • Projected Record: **3-9, 1-7 MW**

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	Sam Houston State
Sept.	14	at Notre Dame
Sept.	21	New Mexico State
Sept.	28	at Liberty
Oct.	5	at San Jose State
Oct.	12	Colorado State
Oct.	19	at Wyoming
Oct.	26	Hawaii
Nov.	2	at Nevada
Nov.	9	Air Force
Nov.	16	at Boise State
Nov.	30	Utah State

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 3-9, 1-7 MW

Sept.	1	Incarnate Word	W	62-30
Sept.	8	at Wisconsin	L	14-45
Sept.	15	at New Mexico State	W	42-25
Sept.	29	Liberty	L	43-52
Oct.	6	at UNLV	W	50-14
Oct.	13	at Colorado State	L	18-20
Oct.	20	Fresno State	L	7-38
Oct.	27	at Utah State	L	19-61
Nov.	3	San Diego State	L	23-31
Nov.	10	at Air Force	L	24-42
Nov.	16	Boise State	L	14-45
Nov.	24	Wyoming	L	3-31

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Rocky Aitogi, OT, Kailua-Kona, HI*
2. Justice Spates, OT, Pacoima, CA*
3. Cade Briggs, OG, Las Vegas, NV
4. Brandt Hughes, QB, Chico, CA*
5. Shaddrick Lowery, S, Dania Beach, FL*
6. Eric Cuffee, CB, Waco, TX*
7. Antonio Hunt, CB, Valencia, CA*
8. Reco Hannah, OLB, Wedowee, AL*
9. Jacob Jankoviak, OG, Fullerton, CA*
10. Kyle Jarvis, TE, Antioch, CA*

*junior college transfer

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	MW	NATIONAL
Scoring	26.6 ppg	8	85
Rushing	153.2 ypg	8	89
Passing	176.8 ypg	9	110
Total	330.4 ypg	11	121
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**MW**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	36.2 ppg	9	113
Rushing	217.0 ypg	11	110
Passing	256.0 ypg	10	104
Total	473.0 ypg	11	119
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**MW**	**NATIONAL**
-4	-0.33	9	91

STAT CORNER

4.8

UNM scored 4.8 points per trip inside the opponent's 40 in 2018, 45th in FBS but an improvement of 0.7 points per trip over 2017.

OFFENSE New Mexico still wants to marry the triple-option and spread offenses and has hired former Liberty play caller Joe Dailey to officiate that wedding. Dailey will look to tailor the offense to the strengths of the team's quarterbacks. Sophomore Tevaka Tuioti showed promise in the spread last year, but a concussion and broken clavicle limited him to two-plus games. His return can help UNM rebound from its 2018 offensive effort — the worst in coach Bob Davie's tenure — because he has been effective in both the triple and the spread. Dailey must make sure senior Sheriron Jones, redshirt freshman Trae Hall and junior college transfer Brandt Hughes are also ready to play.

UNM's triple-option is most lethal when it featured an explosive tailback — something it lacks in 2019. That's why Davie wants to incorporate elements of the spread. Senior Ahmari Davis is a north-and-south runner, and the staff hopes true freshman Chad Alexander adds breakaway speed to a rotation that also includes Daevon Vigilant and Kentrail Moran.

Since 2012, no Lobo wide receiver has more than 35 receptions in a season. Jay Griffin IV has 50 career catches, and junior Q'Drennan returns from a dislocated hip he suffered on UNM's second play from scrimmage in 2018. Junior tight end Marcus Williams emerged as a threat last season.

Multiple junior college transfers join an offensive line that could be a solid unit with four returning starters.

DEFENSE Opposing offenses dictated the fronts and coverages the Lobos played last year. In the offseason, Davie vowed to make the unit more aggressive and promoted safeties coach Jordan Peterson to coordinator in hopes that Peterson can install a more unpredictable and better-disguised scheme to pressure and confuse opposing quarterbacks.

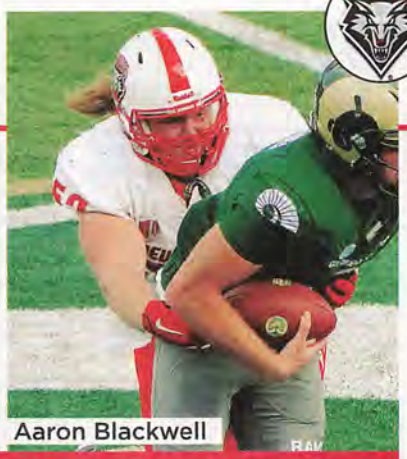
UNM needs senior end and Georgia Tech transfer Trent Sellers, who suffered a season-ending knee injury during 2018 training camp, to help lead the aggressive charge. Sellers could be the Lobos' best pass rusher. Senior interior lineman Aaron Blackwell should benefit significantly from Sellers' presence.

Fifth-year senior middle linebacker Alex Hart played just three games in 2018 due to a knee injury. Hart can align the rest of the unit, which is critical as the defense becomes more multiple. Junior Brandon Shook and senior Alexander Vainikolo provide depth.

In the secondary, only senior cornerback De'John Rogers has starting experience from 2018 — two games. Fellow corners Willie Hobdy, Corey Hightower and Blair Manly are other upperclassmen competing for jobs. Senior safety Patrick Peek heads a position group that also has little game experience.

SPECIALISTS Sophomore placekicker Andrew Shelley and junior punter Tyson Dyer are the latest examples of what has been an area of traditional strength for New Mexico under Davie. Elijah Lilly is a dynamic kickoff returner, and Drennan will handle punts.

FINAL ANALYSIS The Lobos are employing untested schemes with an older but inexperienced roster. Tuioti has to stay healthy the entire season for the offense to have a chance to get its footing. Even so, the Lobos will be hard-pressed to improve significantly upon consecutive 3–9 seasons.



Aaron Blackwell

"They're one of the fastest teams in the country, believe it or not. At skill positions, for two years they've put the fastest kids in the league out there."

— An opposing MW assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (7)			Returning Starters in Bold	
WR	15	Q'Drennan (Jr.)	13	Aaron Molina (Sr.)
WR	**23**	**Jay Griffin IV (Jr.)**	9	Jordan Kress (Jr.)
WR	3	Elijah Lilly (Sr.)	**7**	**Anselem Umeh (Jr.)**
LT	**76**	**Jarred Sylvester (Sr.)**	78	Javon Mosley (Sr.)
LG	77	Charlie Grammel (Sr.)	71	David Zavala (Sr.)
C	**64**	**Kyle Stapley (Jr.)**	66	Jacob Jankoviak (Jr.)
RG	**79**	**Chris Estrella (Sr.)**	56	Austin Cook (Sr.)
RT	**50**	**Teton Saltes (Jr.)**	70	Brad Murphy (So.)
TE	88	Marcus Williams (Jr.)	83	Erik Beilman (Sr.)
QB	8	Tevaka Tuioti (Jr.)	**4**	**Sheriron Jones (Sr.)**
RB	28	Ahmari Davis (Sr.)	5	Daevon Vigilant (So.)
DEFENSE (2)				
DE	**93**	**Nahje Flowers (Jr.)**	95	Adebayo Soremekun (Sr.)
NT	**52**	**Aaron Blackwell (Sr.)**	54	Langston Murray (So.)
DE	84	Trent Sellers (Sr.)	90	Erin Austin (Sr.)
OLB	18	Dylan Horton (So.)	19	Devin Sanders (So.)
MLB	**33**	Alex Hart (Sr.)	46	Brandon Shook (Jr.)
WLB	30	Alexander Vainikolo (Sr.)	5	James Lewis (Jr.)
CB	7	Blair Manly (Sr.)	24	Corey Hightower (Jr.)
CB	8	Willie Hobdy (Sr.)	6	De'John Rogers (Sr.)
NB	21	Brandon Burton (Jr.)	10	Eric Cuffee (Jr.)
FS	3	Patrick Peek (Sr.)	9	Jerrick Reed II (So.)
SS	11	Kameron Miller (Jr.)	2	A.J. Greeley (Jr.)
SPECIAL TEAMS				
K	94	Andrew Shelley (So.)	KR	3 Elijah Lilly (Sr.)
P	96	Tyson Dyer (Jr.)	PR	15 Q'Drennan (Jr.)

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Sheriron Jones, 187-102-1,417-12, 13 TDs
Rushing: Sheriron Jones, 79 att., 286 yds., 0 TDs
Receiving: Elijah Lilly, 21 rec., 375 yds., 5 TDs
Tackles: Brandon Shook, 40
Sacks: Erin Austin, 2.5
Interceptions: De'John Rogers, 1

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Bob Davie
Record at School: 33-54 (7 years)
Career Record: 68-79 (12 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Joe Dailey
Defensive Coordinator: Jordan Peterson
Albuquerque, NM • Dreamstyle Stadium (39,224)

New Mexico Athletics

Utah State **Aggies**

National Forecast: **52** • MW Mountain Prediction: **2** • Projected Record: **8-4, 7-1 MW**

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	30	at Wake Forest
Sept.	7	Stony Brook
Sept.	21	at San Diego State
Sept.	28	Colorado State
Oct.	5	at LSU
Oct.	19	Nevada
Oct.	26	at Air Force
Nov.	2	BYU
Nov.	9	at Fresno State
Nov.	16	Wyoming
Nov.	23	Boise State
Nov.	30	at New Mexico

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 11-2, 7-1 MW

Aug.	31	at Michigan State	L	31-38
Sept.	8	New Mexico State	W	60-13
Sept.	13	Tennessee Tech	W	73-12
Sept.	22	Air Force	W	42-32
Oct.	5	at BYU	W	45-20
Oct.	13	UNLV	W	59-28
Oct.	20	at Wyoming	W	24-16
Oct.	27	New Mexico	W	61-19
Nov.	3	at Hawaii	W	56-17
Nov.	10	San Jose State	W	62-24
Nov.	17	at Colorado State	W	29-24
Nov.	24	at Boise State	L	24-33
Dec.	15	vs. North Texas #	W	52-13

#New Mexico Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Christian LaVelle, LB, Mission Viejo, CA
2. Hunter Hill, OT, Orem, UT
3. Jaymason Willingham, LB, Lacey, WA
4. Josh Calvin, QB, Bellflower, CA
5. Simon Thompson, LB, Salem, OR
6. Cam Lampkin, WR, Mesquite, TX
7. Jackson Owens, OT, Sandy, UT
8. Ajani Carter, WR, Houston, TX
9. Dominic Tatum, DB, Culver City, CA
10. Ashton Adams, OG, Salem, OR

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	MW	NATIONAL
Scoring	47.5 ppg	1	2
Rushing	203.2 ypg	3	31
Passing	294.2 ypg	3	17
Total	497.4 ypg	1	11
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**MW**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	22.2 ppg	4	32
Rushing	143.0 ypg	7	41
Passing	236.5 ypg	7	77
Total	379.5 ypg	6	51
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**MW**	**NATIONAL**
+14	+1.08	1	3

STAT CORNER

+1.8

USU averaged 5.4 points per trip inside the opponent's 40 and allowed just 3.6 per trip, a plus-1.8 margin (fourth in FBS).

OFFENSE The losses on offense are severe — four starting offensive linemen graduated, the top running back and tight end left early for the NFL and the top three wide receivers were seniors on an offense that set many school records. However, Jordan Love — one of the nation's unknown stars — is back at quarterback after passing for 3,567 yards and 32 touchdowns while completing 64 percent of his passes in 2018. He also rushed for seven scores.

Tackle Alfred Edwards is the other returning starter. He will anchor a young and inexperienced line.

Running back Gerold Bright is back after rushing for 888 yards on just 141 carries. He scored 13 TDs, 10 on the ground and three through the air.

The receiving corps should be deep and full of players eager to prove themselves. Speedy return specialists Jordan Nathan and Savon Scarver will get more time catching balls, while Taylor Compton and Deven Thompkins made waves during the spring. Carson Terrell will start at tight end.

"Our challenge will be rebuilding an offensive line," coach Gary Andersen says. "We also have a similar thing at wide receiver. But we have some hungry guys that are ready to prove themselves."

DEFENSE Seven starters and many backups return to a unit that scored six touchdowns and tied for the national lead with 32 forced turnovers a year ago.

Defensive coordinator Justin Ena called his senior-heavy line a strength. End Tipa Galeai made a big splash last year with 10.5 sacks, two interceptions and three forced fumbles. Justus Te'i, Dalton Baker, Christopher 'Unga, Fua Leilua and Devon Anderson are all expected to see significant time. "We have some good depth at the D-line spots," Ena says. "I'm excited to see what they will do. Ball disruption is a big thing for us. We will continue to stress that."

Linebacker David Woodward led the team with 134 tackles last year. The All-America candidate also picked off two passes and recorded five sacks.

In the secondary, Shaq Bond, who is back from an injury, and DJ Williams, who had four interceptions, bring experience to a young group. New additions include Dominic Tatum, Troy Lefeged Jr. and Cash Gilliam. Zahodri Jackson and Andre Grayson drew praise in the spring.

SPECIALISTS Placekicker Dominik Eberle was a Groza Award finalist in 2017 and holds several school records. Punter Aaron Dalton was granted an extra year and looked good in the spring. Scarver was an All-America kickoff returner, leading the nation with a 33.7-yard average.

FINAL ANALYSIS It's been a relatively smooth transition from Matt Wells (now at Texas Tech) to Andersen, who returns to Logan after serving as the Aggies' head coach from 2009-12. He takes over a team that won 11 games last year, including a 52–13 victory over North Texas in the New Mexico Bowl. The schedule this year will be more of a challenge — USU plays Wake Forest and LSU in nonconference action and must visit Fresno State from the Mountain West's West Division — but that doesn't faze the coach.

While there are areas of concern, the Aggies signed one of their best recruiting classes in recent memory. It will be hard to win 11 games again, but USU should once again be in the mix in the division and play in a bowl for the eighth time in the last nine seasons.

Jordan Love

"Defensively they're returning a lot of what they had last year, and Gary (Andersen) will make them significantly better."

— An opposing MW assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (2) — Returning Starters in Bold

WR	16	Jordan Nathan (Jr.)	13	Devin Heckstall (Sr.)
WR	17	Taylor Compton (Jr.)	19	Deven Thompkins (So.)
WR	81	Savon Scarver (Jr.)	87	Derek Wright (Jr.)
LT	**72**	**Alfred Edwards (So.)**	77	Andy Koch (Fr.)
LG	75	Ty Shaw (Jr.)	60	Wyatt Bowles (Fr.)
C	58	Demytrick Ali'ifua (Jr.)	64	Heneli Avendano (Fr.)
RG	65	Karter Shaw (Fr.)	66	Mohelika Uasike (Jr.)
RT	73	Kyler Hack (So.)	78	Jacob South (Fr.)
TE	88	Carson Terrell (Jr.)	89	Travis Boman (Jr.)
QB	**10**	**Jordan Love (Jr.)**	3	Henry Colombi (So.)
RB	8	Gerold Bright (Sr.)	27	Enoch Nawahine (Fr.)

DEFENSE (7)

DE	51	Justus Te'i (Jr.)	24	Dalton Baker (Sr.)
DT	**96**	**Christopher 'Unga (Sr.)**	94	Caden Andersen (Jr.)
DT	**91**	**Devon Anderson (Sr.)**	**44**	**Fua Leilua (Sr.)**
DE	**10**	**Tipa Galeai (Sr.)**	93	Jacoby Wildman (Sr.)
LB	**9**	**David Woodward (Jr.)**	39	Maika Magalei (So.)
LB	33	Kevin Meitzenheimer (Jr.)	15	Baron Gajkowski (Jr.)
NB	**7**	**DJ Williams (Sr.)**	30	Andre Grayson (So.)
CB	14	Zahodri Jackson (So.)	23	Dominic Tatum (Fr.)
CB	2	Ja'Marcus Ingram (Jr.)	37	Jarrod Green (So.)
S	**25**	**Shaq Bond (Jr.)**	6	Cameron Haney (Sr.)
S	21	Troy Lefeged Jr. (Jr.)	22	Cash Gilliam (Jr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	62	Dominik Eberle (Sr.)	**KR**	81	Savon Scarver (Jr.)
P	89	Aaron Dalton (Sr.)	**PR**	16	Jordan Nathan (Jr.)

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Jordan Love, 417-267-3,567-6, 32 TDs
Rushing: Gerold Bright, 141 att., 888 yds., 10 TDs
Receiving: Jordan Nathan, 28 rec., 297 yds., 3 TDs
Tackles: David Woodward, 134
Sacks: Tipa Galeai, 10.5
Interceptions: DJ Williams, 4

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Gary Andersen
Record at School: 26-24 (4 years)
Career Record: 57-61 (10 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Mike Sanford
Defensive Coordinator: Justin Ena
Logan, UT • Maverik Stadium (25,513)

Utah State Athletics

Wyoming **Cowboys**

National Forecast: **96** • MW Mountain Prediction: **4** • Projected Record: **6-6, 3-5 MW**

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	Missouri
Sept.	7	at Texas State
Sept.	14	Idaho
Sept.	21	at Tulsa
Sept.	28	UNLV
Oct.	12	at San Diego State
Oct.	19	New Mexico
Oct.	26	Nevada
Nov.	9	at Boise State
Nov.	16	at Utah State
Nov.	23	Colorado State
Nov.	30	at Air Force

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 6-6, 4-4 MW

Aug.	25	at New Mexico State	W	29-7
Sept.	1	Washington State	L	19-41
Sept.	8	at Missouri	L	13-40
Sept.	15	Wofford	W	17-14
Sept.	29	Boise State	L	14-34
Oct.	6	at Hawaii	L	13-17
Oct.	13	at Fresno State	L	3-27
Oct.	20	Utah State	L	16-24
Oct.	26	at Colorado State	W	34-21
Nov.	3	San Jose State	W	24-9
Nov.	17	Air Force	W	35-27
Nov.	24	at New Mexico	W	31-3

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Shae Suiaunoa, LB, Houston, TX
2. Alonzo Hall, DE, Reseda, CA
3. Levi Williams, QB, Canyon Lake, TX
4. Titus Swen, RB, Fort Worth, TX
5. Alphonzo Andrews Jr., RB, St. Louis, MO
6. Keonte Glinton, S, Bakersfield, CA
7. Dawaiian McNeely, RB, Ceres, CA
8. Jack Lookabaugh, OT, Coppell, TX
9. Alex Brown, WR, Spring, TX
10. Caleb Roberson, CB, St. Louis, MO

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	MW	NATIONAL
Scoring	20.7 ppg	11	119
Rushing	199.4 ypg	4	39
Passing	131.3 ypg	11	125
Total	330.8 ypg	10	119
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**MW**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	22.0 ppg	2	28
Rushing	129.5 ypg	4	25
Passing	196.7 ypg	2	32
Total	326.2 ypg	2	19
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**MW**	**NATIONAL**
+4	+0.33	4	40

STAT CORNER

+0.5

The Cowboys lost a top-10 pick at quarterback and actually improved by 0.5 yards per play, from 4.7 (123rd in FBS) to 5.2 (108th).

OFFENSE Quarterback Sean Chambers was impressive in less than four full games as a true freshman. He ranked third on the team with 329 rushing yards and completed 15-of-25 passing attempts for 266 yards with three touchdowns and no interceptions. Chambers helped spark a late-season rally in which the Cowboys won their final four games. He broke his right fibula in the second-to-last game but was able to preserve a season of eligibility and will be a redshirt freshman in 2019. He is the favorite to be the starter over sophomore Tyler Vander Waal.

Wyoming must replace the Mountain West's leading rusher last season in Nico Evans. Sophomore Xazavian Valladay, second on the team with 396 yards and three TDs in 2018, is the leading candidate.

Seniors Austin Conway, C.J. Johnson, Raghib Ismail Jr. and John Okwoli give Wyoming experience at wide receiver, but they all need to be more productive and explosive. Johnson is a proven big-play threat, but he missed all of last season with a left knee injury.

The offensive line received a blow during the spring when junior guard Gavin Rush was lost for the season with a torn ACL after missing 2018 with a torn biceps. Center/guard Keegan Cryder earned Freshman All-America honors last season, and there is decent depth at guard. Depth at tackle is a concern.

Wyoming returns seniors at tight end and fullback in Josh Harshman and Jaylon Watson, respectively.

DEFENSE The strength of the group is at linebacker, with seniors Logan Wilson in the middle and Cassh Maluia outside. Wilson led Wyoming with 103 tackles, including 11 for a loss. Maluia added 46 tackles and six TFLs.

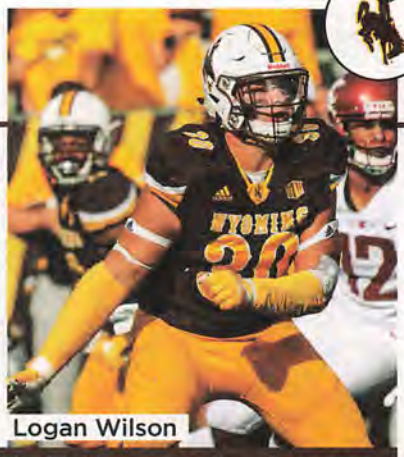
The Cowboys should be solid at cornerback with seniors Tyler Hall and Antonio Hull. Hall started his career as a corner but has played nickel — a hybrid defensive back/outside linebacker — in Wyoming's 4-3 scheme. Hull is back at cornerback but is versatile enough to play anywhere in the secondary.

The Cowboys have some experience along the defensive line in senior Josiah Hall and junior Garrett Crall at end, along with juniors Ravontae Holt and Javaree Jackson at tackle. However, their roles will be bigger, and depth behind all of them is unproven.

Wyoming must replace safeties Marcus Epps and Andrew Wingard, who combined for 779 tackles (44.5 for a loss), 30 pass break-ups and 19 interceptions over the last four seasons. Alijah Halliburton is the leader of this season's group. Juniors Braden Smith and Esaias Gandy are competing for playing time at both safety spots.

SPECIALISTS Senior placekicker Cooper Rothe was one of three finalists for the Lou Groza Award in 2018 after converting 16-of-17 field goal attempts. Junior punter Tim Zaleski returns, but he tore an ACL in the fifth game last season. Junior walk-on wide receiver Dontae Crow handled the punting duties with Zaleski out. Both will compete for the starting job.

FINAL ANALYSIS Wyoming has a chance for its fourth consecutive .500-or-better season in 2019, which hasn't happened since 1996-99. Offensively, Chambers must progress at quarterback, and the Cowboys must become more balanced. Defensively, players who have been waiting in the wings must step up in prominent roles, especially on the defensive line and at safety.



Logan Wilson

"Craig Bohl teams aren't going to stay down for long. He's uniquely qualified to coach up the gaps in recruiting at a place like that."

— An opposing MW assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

Returning Starters in Bold

OFFENSE (4)				
WR	25	**Austin Conway (Sr.)**	19	Ayden Eberhardt (Jr.)
WR	14	C.J. Johnson (Sr.)	17	Raghib Ismail Jr. (Sr.)
LT	78	Alonzo Velasquez (Jr.)		Jack Lookabaugh (Fr.)
LG	65	Zach Watts (Fr.)	79	Logan Harris (Jr.)
C	73	**Keegan Cryder (So.)**	57	Patrick Arnold (So.)
RG	69	Eric Abojei (So.)	73	Keegan Cryder (So.)
RT	62	**Rudy Stofer (So.)**	75	Frank Crum (Fr.)
TE	33	Josh Harshman (Sr.)	84	Nate Weinman (So.)
QB	12	Sean Chambers (Fr.)	18	**Tyler Vander Waal (So.)**
RB	6	Xazavian Valladay (So.)	7	Reow Jackson (Fr.)
FB	35	Jaylon Watson (Sr.)	34	Jeff Burroughs (Jr.)
DEFENSE (5)				
DE	88	**Garrett Crall (Jr.)**	51	Solomon Byrd (Fr.)
DT	98	Ravontae Holt (Jr.)	44	Victor Jones (So.)
NT	86	Javaree Jackson (Jr.)	97	Mario Mora (Fr.)
DE	53	Josiah Hall (Sr.)	41	Davon Wells-Ross (So.)
OLB	46	**Cassh Maluia (Sr.)**	43	Ben Wisdorf (Sr.)
ILB	30	**Logan Wilson (Sr.)**	48	Chad Muma (So.)
NB	18	Keyon Blankenbaker (So.)		Allen Smith (Fr.)
CB	4	**Antonio Hull (Sr.)**	21	C.J. Coldon (So.)
CB	9	**Tyler Hall (Sr.)**	12	Ja'Lani Ellison (So.)
S	3	Alijah Halliburton (Sr.)	5	Esaias Gandy (Jr.)
S	26	Braden Smith (Jr.)	8	Rome Weber (Fr.)
SPECIAL TEAMS				
K	40	Cooper Rothe (Sr.)	KR 9	Tyler Hall (Sr.)
P	8	Dontae Crow (Jr.)	PR 25	Austin Conway (Sr.)

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Tyler Vander Waal, 246-120-1,310-4, 5 TDs
Rushing: Xazavian Valladay, 71 att., 396 yds., 3 TDs
Receiving: Austin Conway, 32 rec., 250 yds., 1 TD
Tackles: Logan Wilson, 103
Sacks: Garrett Crall, 4.5
Interceptions: Antonio Hull, Logan Wilson, 2

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Craig Bohl
Record at School: 28-35 (5 years)
Career Record: 132-67 (16 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Brent Vigen
Defensive Coordinator: Jake Dickert
Laramie, WY • War Memorial Stadium (29,181)

Wyoming Athletics

Fresno State **Bulldogs**

National Forecast: **56** • MW West Prediction: **1** • Projected Record: **8-5, 6-2 MW**

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	at USC
Sept.	7	Minnesota
Sept.	21	Sacramento State
Sept.	28	at New Mexico State
Oct.	12	at Air Force
Oct.	19	UNLV
Oct.	26	Colorado State
Nov.	2	at Hawaii
Nov.	9	Utah State
Nov.	16	at San Diego State
Nov.	23	Nevada
Nov.	30	at San Jose State

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 12-2, 7-1 MW

Sept.	1	Idaho	W	79-13
Sept.	8	at Minnesota	L	14-21
Sept.	15	at UCLA	W	38-14
Sept.	29	Toledo	W	49-27
Oct.	6	at Nevada	W	21-3
Oct.	13	Wyoming	W	27-3
Oct.	20	at New Mexico	W	38-7
Oct.	27	Hawaii	W	50-20
Nov.	3	at UNLV	W	48-3
Nov.	9	at Boise State	L	17-24
Nov.	17	San Diego State	W	23-14
Nov.	24	San Jose State	W	31-13
Dec.	1	at Boise State # (ot)	W	19-16
Dec.	15	vs. Arizona State %	W	31-20

#MW Championship %Las Vegas Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Jalen Cropper, WR, Parlier, CA
2. Deven Jarvis, CB, West Covina, CA
3. Reggie Strong, S, Vallejo, CA
4. Jamal Glaspie, WR, Los Angeles, CA
5. Devonta Bridges, ILB, Rialto, CA
6. Raymond Pauwels, TE, Litchfield Park, AZ*
7. Juan Rodriguez, TE, Portola, CA*
8. Keric Wheatfall, WR, Cypress, TX
9. Peyton Dixon, RB, Reno, NV
10. Josh Kelly, WR, Fresno, CA

*junior college transfer

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	MW	NATIONAL
Scoring	34.6 ppg	3	26
Rushing	154.4 ypg	7	87
Passing	267.1 ypg	6	29
Total	421.5 ypg	4	47
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**MW**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	14.1 ppg	1	3
Rushing	132.2 ypg	5	30
Passing	189.4 ypg	1	23
Total	321.6 ypg	1	17
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**MW**	**NATIONAL**
+12	+0.86	2	9

STAT CORNER

22

Fresno State has won 22 games over the last two seasons. Only six programs have won more during that stretch.

OFFENSE In his two seasons at quarterback, Marcus McMaryion led the Bulldogs to 22 wins, two bowl victories and a Mountain West championship. The price of all that success is a lack of experience among his replacements. While Jorge Reyna performed well in mop-up duty, no one else on the depth chart has taken a college snap. Reyna and Ben Wooldridge got the most snaps in spring practice, but don't be surprised if coach Jeff Tedford mines the graduate transfer market like he did two years ago with McMaryion.

The changes don't stop there. Fresno State also has a new offensive coordinator in Ryan Grubb, promoted from line coach when Kalen DeBoer departed for Indiana. He will have to reconstruct a receiving corps that replaces all three starters, including KeeSean Johnson, the Bulldogs' all-time leader in catches and yards. The top returning target is tight end Jared Rice, who blossomed late last season, and there's enough positional depth to run packages with double tight ends.

Tedford likes to rotate his tailbacks, which means Ronnie Rivers and Jordan Mims will be splitting carries for a third straight year. Mims has the more physical style, while Rivers is more elusive, best exemplified by his 212-yard, two-touchdown outing in the Las Vegas Bowl. Both are excellent pass catchers.

With only one returning starter, the offensive line also needs an overhaul, though the expected return of Netane Muti from an ruptured Achilles that sidelined him all of last season will be a significant boost.

DEFENSE Stalwarts Jeffrey Allison and Mike Bell declared early for the NFL Draft, while corner Tank Kelly and two other starting linebackers used up their eligibility. Which leaves coordinator Bert Watts plugging holes in a unit that has been a massive part of the Bulldogs' recent success.

One of those holes is being filled by Mykal Walker, an All-MW performer at defensive end who will fill Allison's shoes at middle linebacker. Walker sought the position switch, believing it a better fit for his 6'3", 227-pound frame. Even though Walker was one of the team's top edge rushers last season (4.5 sacks, 14 TFLs), Tedford and Watts are confident Isaiah Johnson and others can fill that role. Bolstering the front seven is a deep and experienced interior line featuring Jasad Haynes and Kevin Atkins.

Juju Hughes and Jaron Bryant, with a combined 56 career starts and nine interceptions, return from a stellar secondary. The replacement for Bell at free safety is Wylan Free, who has impressed coaches with his coverage skills and tackling. There was enough depth for Arron Mosby to convert to Sam linebacker He's also one to watch.

SPECIALISTS The special teams will have a familiar look with punter Blake Cusick and placekicker Asa Fuller both returning. Fuller made two field goals in the snow during the MW Championship Game in Boise, something Bulldogs fans won't soon forget.

FINAL ANALYSIS Tedford has been nothing short of a magician at his alma mater after taking over a program that went 1–11 the season before he arrived. Considering all the turnover, it's hard to foresee a repeat of last season's 12 wins. Still, there's enough talent immersed in the program's new winning culture for Fresno State to capture its third straight MW West title. Much of that depends on finding a quarterback.

Ronnie Rivers

"They play hard. They can do a lot of different things with their defense, and they got the California recruiting back in shape."

— An opposing MW assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (2)			Returning Starters in Bold	
WR	1	Keric Wheatfall (Jr.)	2	Patrick Elima-Jeune (So.)
WR	7	Derrion Grim (Sr.)	4	Emoryie Edwards (Fr.)
WR	27	Zane Pope (So.)	8	Chris Coleman (So.)
LT	52	Netane Muti (Jr.)	79	Nick Aibuedefe (Sr.)
LG	66	Quireo Woodley (So.)	77	Nick Abbs (Sr.)
C	50	Tyrone Sampson (Fr.)	59	Matt Smith (Jr.)
RG	51	Jace Fuamatu (Fr.)	55	Cody Pound (Sr.)
RT	**65**	**Syrus Tuitele (Jr.)**	72	Dontae Bull (So.)
TE	**16**	**Jared Rice (Sr.)**	15	Cam Sutton (Sr.)
QB	11	Jorge Reyna (Sr.)	6	Ben Wooldridge (Fr.)
RB	20	Ronnie Rivers (Jr.)	22	Jordan Mims (Jr.)
DEFENSE (6)				
DE	18	Isaiah Johnson (So.)	51	Alex Cruz (So.)
DT	**90**	**Kevin Atkins (Jr.)**	99	Ricky McCoy (Sr.)
DT	**93**	**Jasad Haynes (Sr.)**	98	Keti Iakopo (Sr.)
DE	**33**	**Kwami Jones (Sr.)**	31	Andrew Wright (Jr.)
WLB	29	Justin Rice (Jr.)	11	Sherwin King (Fr.)
MLB	**3**	**Mykal Walker (Sr.)**	41	Dorzzel Hicks (Sr.)
SLB	15	Arron Mosby (Jr.)	16	Rian Fields (Fr.)
CB	**14**	**Jaron Bryant (Sr.)**	17	Deonte Perry (Jr.)
CB	2	Chris Gaston (So.)	22	Deshawn Ruffin (Fr.)
SS	**23**	**Juju Hughes (Sr.)**	25	Bryson Oglesby (Sr.)
FS	4	Wylan Free (So.)	10	Shawn Dourseau (Fr.)
SPECIAL TEAMS				
K	37	Asa Fuller (So.)	KR 2	Patrick Elima-Jeune (So.)
P	47	Blake Cusick (Sr.)	PR 20	Ronnie Rivers (Jr.)

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Jorge Reyna, 12-8-111-0, 1 TD
Rushing: Ronnie Rivers, 132 att., 743 yds., 10 TDs
Receiving: Jared Rice, 55 att., 664 yds., 3 TDs
Tackles: Mykal Walker, 87
Sacks: Mykal Walker, 4.5
Interceptions: Juju Hughes, 4

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Jeff Tedford
Record at School: 22-6 (2 years)
Career Record: 104-63 (13 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Ryan Grubb
Defensive Coordinator: Bert Watts
Fresno, CA • Bulldog Stadium (41,031)

Fresno State Athletics

Hawaii **Rainbow Warriors**

National Forecast: **93** • MW West Prediction: **3** • Projected Record: **7-6, 5-3 MW**

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	24	Arizona
Sept.	7	Oregon State
Sept.	14	at Washington
Sept.	21	Central Arkansas
Sept.	28	at Nevada
Oct.	12	at Boise State
Oct.	19	Air Force
Oct.	26	at New Mexico
Nov.	2	Fresno State
Nov.	9	San Jose State
Nov.	16	at UNLV
Nov.	23	San Diego State
Nov.	30	Army

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 8-6, 5-3 MW

Aug.	25	at Colorado State	W	43-34
Sept.	1	Navy	W	59-41
Sept.	8	Rice	W	43-29
Sept.	15	at Army	L	21-28
Sept.	22	Duquesne	W	42-21
Sept.	29	at San Jose State (ot)	W	44-41
Oct.	6	Wyoming	W	17-13
Oct.	13	at BYU	L	23-49
Oct.	20	Nevada	L	22-40
Oct.	27	at Fresno State	L	20-50
Nov.	3	Utah State	L	17-56
Nov.	17	UNLV	W	35-28
Nov.	24	at San Diego State (ot)	W	31-30
Dec.	22	vs. Louisiana Tech #	L	14-31

#Hawaii Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Lincoln Victor, ATH, Vancouver, WA
2. Mason Vega, DE, Rancho Cucamonga, CA*
3. Zach Bowers, LB, Chandler, AZ
4. Tiger Peterson, DB, Honolulu, HI
5. Zach Daniel, QB, Houston, TX
6. Travon Killins, CB, Datona Beach, FL
7. Steven Fiso, ATH, Pago Pago, American Samoa
8. Melquise Stovall, WR, Lancaster, CA*
9. Arasi Mose, OT, Honolulu, HI
10. Boone Abbott, QB, American Fork, UT

*junior college transfer

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	MW	NATIONAL
Scoring	30.8 ppg	5	49
Rushing	109.6 ypg	10	122
Passing	310.3 ypg	1	9
Total	419.9 ypg	5	49
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**MW**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	35.1 ppg	8	109
Rushing	204.6 ypg	9	103
Passing	235.1 ypg	6	76
Total	439.7 ypg	8	100
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**MW**	**NATIONAL**
-9	-0.64	11	114

STAT CORNER

123.6

The hot start fizzled: Cole McDonald's passer rating was 169.8 over his first six games but only 123.6 over his last seven.

OFFENSE Cole McDonald burst onto the scene last season unlike any Hawaii quarterback before him, accounting for 15 touchdowns (13 passing) in the first three starts of his career. He finished the year ranked in the top 10 nationally in TD passes (36), passing yards (3,875) and total offense per game (325.7). Nevertheless, McDonald is being pressed for the starting job by redshirt freshman Chevan Cordeiro. Cordeiro, a Hawaii high school phenom, started in place of the injured McDonald in a win over Wyoming and the came off the bench in the fourth quarter to complete 4-of-5 passes — three of them for TDs — in a win over UNLV while still preserving a redshirt year.

Whoever the quarterback is will miss game-breaking wide receiver John Ursua, who led the nation in TD receptions (16) but left school early to test the NFL market. Cedric Byrd and JoJo Ward — who each scored nine TDs — provide big-play ability. Kumoku Noa and several transfers will need to step up.

Guard Solo Vaipulu and tackle Ilm Manning were two of the only four true freshman offensive linemen in the nation to start every regular-season game last year. Two others starters on the offensive line, center Kohl Levao and guard J.R. Hensley, also return.

The Rainbow Warriors are looking for more efficiency from a rushing offense that ranked 122nd nationally. Dayton Furuta, a 250-pound bowling ball, and Fred Holly III will be the primary backs.

DEFENSE With nine starters returning, the Hawaii defense is positioned to make a big leap — and it will need to after yielding an average of 35.1 points per game in 2018.

The three top tacklers, linebackers Solomon Matautia and Penei Pavihi and safety Ikem Okeke, all return, as does the rest of the secondary.

End Kaimana Padello, who had 13.5 tackles for a loss, was a second-team All-Mountain West selection and will be counted on once again to get pressure on the quarterback. Rojesterman Farris II is Hawaii's top cornerback. The return of Jeremiah Pritchard from a redshirt year should help solidify the linebacker corps, and junior college transfer Cortez Davis and true freshman Tiger Peterson are being counted on to bolster the secondary.

Creating more turnovers will be a focus after UH forced only 12 in 14 games a year ago. Only 10 teams nationally had fewer takeaways.

SPECIALISTS Ryan Meskell, an Australian who had played only rugby and soccer before arriving at UH as a sophomore, has made himself into a weapon. He converted 15-of-18 field goal attempts last year. Stan Gaudion and Ben Scruton will compete for the punting chores again.

FINAL ANALYSIS Coming off its first winning season since 2010, Hawaii welcomes back 17 starters, and — possibly more important — head coach Nick Rolovich was able to keep the coaching staff intact after a decade of revolving-door attrition.

Hawaii will need all that familiarity and experience against an upgraded schedule. UH opens 2019 with three Power 5 opponents in a row — Arizona, Oregon State and Washington — and also goes to Boise State in mid-October. If the Bows can steal a win somewhere in that gauntlet, they will have a shot at achieving the school's first back-to-back winning seasons since the mid-2000s.

Cole McDonald

"They're getting that swagger back that June Jones' teams had. Nick (Rolovich) has that attitude that you need there."

— An opposing MW assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (8) — Returning Starters in Bold

WR	**19**	**JoJo Ward (Sr.)**	23	Jared Smart (Jr.)
WR	**16**	**Cedric Byrd (Sr.)**	14	James Phillips (So.)
WR	89	Jason-Matthew Sharsh (Sr.)	17	Melquise Stovall (Jr.)
WR	85	Kumoku Noa (Jr.)	15	Jonah Panoke (Fr.)
LT	**75**	**Ilm Manning (So.)**	78	Ernest Moore (Jr.)
LG	**57**	**J.R. Hensley (Sr.)**	59	Emil Graves (Sr.)
C	**72**	**Kohl Levao (Sr.)**	**63**	**Taaga Tuulima (Jr.)**
RG	**52**	**Solo Vaipulu (So.)**	74	Gene Pryor (Jr.)
RT	58	Joey Nu'uanu-Kuh'iki (Jr.)	55	Micah Vanterpool (So.)
QB	**13**	**Cole McDonald (Jr.)**	12	Chevan Cordeiro (Fr.)
RB	42	Dayton Furuta (Sr.)	21	Fred Holly III (Jr.)

DEFENSE (9)

DE	48	Derek Thomas (Jr.)	35	Jeffrey Keene (Sr.)
DT	**54**	**Blessman Ta'ala (So.)**	66	Eperone Moananu (Jr.)
DT	**91**	**Samiuela Akoteu (Sr.)**	95	Kendall Hune (Sr.)
DE	**96**	**Kaimana Padello (Sr.)**	49	Manly Williams (Sr.)
LB	**27**	**Solomon Matautia (Sr.)**	41	Scheyenne Sanitoa (Jr.)
LB	**33**	**Penei Pavihi (Jr.)**	10	Jeremiah Pritchard (Jr.)
NB	13	Khoury Bethley (So.)	24	Kai Kaneshiro (Fr.)
CB	**16**	**Kalen Hicks (Sr.)**	20	Zach Wilson (Jr.)
CB	**4**	**Rojesterman Farris II (Sr.)**	18	Cortez Davis (Jr.)
S	**19**	**Eugene Ford (Jr.)**	29	Donovan Dalton (So.)
S	**22**	**Ikem Okeke (Sr.)**	31	Tiger Peterson (Fr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	94	Ryan Meskell (Sr.)	**KR**	82	Justice Augafa (Sr.)
P	99	Stan Gaudion (Jr.)	**PR**	19	JoJo Ward (Sr.)

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Cole McDonald, 484-285-3,875-10, 36 TDs
Rushing: Fred Holly III, 108 att., 468 yds., 4 TDs
Receiving: Cedric Byrd, 79 rec., 970 yds., 9 TDs
Tackles: Solomon Matautia, 92
Sacks: Kaimana Padello, 8.5
Interceptions: Zach Wilson, 2

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Nick Rolovich
Record at School: 18-22 (3 years)
Career Record: 18-22 (3 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Brian Smith
Defensive Coordinator: Corey Batoon
Honolulu, HI • Aloha Stadium (50,000)

Jay Metzger

Nevada **Wolf Pack**

National Forecast: **99** • MW West Prediction: **4** • Projected Record: **5-7, 3-5 MW**

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	30	Purdue
Sept.	7	at Oregon
Sept.	14	Weber State
Sept.	21	at UTEP
Sept.	28	Hawaii
Oct.	12	San Jose State
Oct.	19	at Utah State
Oct.	26	at Wyoming
Nov.	2	New Mexico
Nov.	9	at San Diego State
Nov.	23	at Fresno State
Nov.	30	UNLV

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 8-5, 5-3 MW

Aug.	31	Portland State	W	72-19
Sept.	8	at Vanderbilt	L	10-41
Sept.	15	Oregon State	W	37-35
Sept.	22	at Toledo	L	44-63
Sept.	29	at Air Force	W	28-25
Oct.	6	Fresno State	L	3-21
Oct.	13	Boise State	L	27-31
Oct.	20	at Hawaii	W	40-22
Oct.	27	San Diego State	W	28-24
Nov.	10	Colorado State	W	49-10
Nov.	17	at San Jose State	W	21-12
Nov.	24	at UNLV	L	29-34
Dec.	29	vs. Ark. State # (ot)	W	16-13

#Arizona Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Jamaal Bell, ATH, Lancaster, CA
2. Cam Stephens, CB, Rancho Cucamonga, CA
3. Henry Ikahihifo, TE, Lancaster, CA
4. Austin Kirksey, QB, Marietta, GA
5. Breylon Garcia, DE, Lufkin, TX
6. Javasia Brunson, DE, Lufkin, TX
7. Jalen Williams, OLB, Phoenix, AZ
8. JaVanz Dornners, ILB, Oakland, CA
9. Melquan Stovall, WR, Palmdale, CA
10. Trey Price, OT, Woodland, CA*

*junior college transfer

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	MW	NATIONAL
Scoring	31.1 ppg	4	45
Rushing	152.0 ypg	9	93
Passing	278.8 ypg	5	24
Total	430.8 ypg	3	38
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**MW**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	26.9 ppg	7	63
Rushing	142.0 ypg	6	39
Passing	245.5 ypg	9	88
Total	387.5 ypg	7	58
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**MW**	**NATIONAL**
-6	-0.46	10	107

STAT CORNER

-7

No defense improved more than Nevada's in 2018: The Wolf Pack allowed 7.0 fewer points per game and 0.9 fewer yards per play.

OFFENSE Coach Jay Norvell has repeatedly emphasized a need for depth. That depth will be tested heading into a season with an uncertain quarterback situation.

Senior Cristian Solano has the inside track to helm Nevada's Air Raid. But big-armed redshirt freshman Carson Strong impressed in spring and could supplant Solano. Moreover, junior college walk-on Malik Henry — known for his role on "Last Chance U" — turned heads in spring and is a sleeper heading into the fall.

Nevada's depth at receiver has become a hallmark of Norvell's program, and that won't change this year. Senior Kaleb Fossum (734 yards), sophomore Romeo Doubs (562 yards), junior Elijah Cooks (348 yards), and senior Brendan O'Leary-Orange (214 yards) all return. Former walk-on Ben Putman could prove valuable, too, after a breakout game in last year's Arizona Bowl. Watch out for Cole Turner, a sophomore who is poised for a breakout season.

Sophomore running back Toa Taua (872 yards, six TDs) is the team's most dynamic threat, though. Bruising senior Kelton Moore will add a change of pace, but with sophomore Devonte Lee out for the season, Taua will shoulder much more of the load.

On the offensive line, Nevada is unsettled on the right side. Aaron Frost and Nate Brown emerged in spring, but expect sophomore Moses Landis, who missed all of last year, and junior college transfer Trey Price to battle for time. Still, questions remain on the Wolf Pack's unproven line.

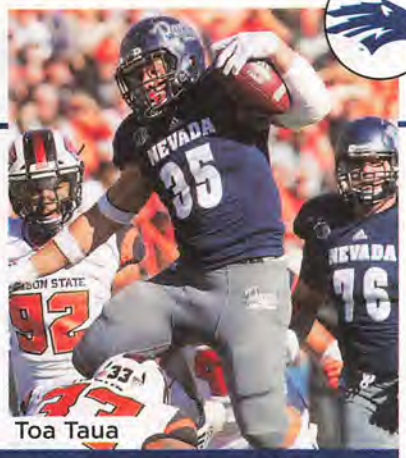
DEFENSE It was the defense that led last year's turnaround with veteran coordinator Jeff Casteel's 3-3-5 stack. But Casteel has a challenge in 2019 as the Wolf Pack return just two of their top seven tacklers. The good news is that talent and experience return in the middle, with senior linebackers Gabriel Sewell and Lucas Weber set to anchor the defense.

Up front, sophomore Dom Peterson (10.5 tackles for a loss, 3.0 sacks) emerged last year from the shadow of Korey Rush and Malik Reed, and he figures to lead in 2019 along with senior tackle Hausia Sekona. Expect a rotation up front, with Kaleb Meder and Chris Green factoring strongly.

Daniel Brown emerged as one of the top corners in the league, and EJ Muhammad, who missed the bulk of 2018 with a shoulder injury, is back. The three safety spots are the concern heading into 2019. Tyson Williams and junior Austin Arnold account for the only three starts at safety on the roster. Those two, along with converted offensive players Daiyan Henley (wideout) and Kaymen Cureton (quarterback), are the front-runners to emerge this season.

SPECIALISTS Nevada has a pair of seniors leading the way in the kicking game. Punter Quinton Conaway (43.6-yard average) is among the league's best. Kicker Spencer Pettit has an accurate leg with range into the upper 40s. Fossum and Doubs give the Pack explosive ability in the return game.

FINAL ANALYSIS Nevada looks to build on the progress it made in 2018, but with a revamped defense and an unsettled quarterback situation, it won't be easy. The Wolf Pack open at home against Purdue and play at Oregon, and their conference schedule includes road games at Fresno State, San Diego State and Utah State. Nevada will have to jell quickly to achieve bowl eligibility.



Toa Taua

"They can be very scary on offense. They've really grown into that new system. Jay (Norvell) has done a good job with their culture."

— An opposing MW assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (4)				Returning Starters in Bold
WR	3	Kaleb Fossum (Sr.)	85	Ben Putman (Sr.)
WR	**7**	**Romeo Doubs (So.)**	**8**	**Brendan O'Leary-Orange (Sr.)**
WR	4	Elijah Cooks (Jr.)	19	Cole Turner (So.)
LT	**71**	**Jake Nelson (Sr.)**	62	Trey Price (So.)
LG	72	Miles Beach (Jr.)	54	Jermaine Ledbetter (Jr.)
C	70	Nathan Edwards (Jr.)	67	Gray Davis (So.)
RG	65	Aaron Frost (So.)	60	Dylan Porter (So.)
RT	**76**	**Nate Brown (Jr.)**	66	Cole Watts (Fr.)
TE	31	Reagan Roberson (Jr.)	9	Crishaun Lappin (So.)
QB	13	Cristian Solano (Sr.)	12	Carson Strong (Fr.)
RB	35	Toa Taua (So.)	5	Jaxson Kincaide (Sr.)
DEFENSE (4)				
DE	**99**	**Dom Peterson (So.)**	98	Sam Hammond (Jr.)
DT	**96**	**Hausia Sekona (Sr.)**	54	Chris Green (Jr.)
DE	92	Kaleb Meder (Sr.)	57	Jaden Lewis (So.)
LB	24	Lucas Weber (Sr.)	16	Maliek Broady (Sr.)
LB	**7**	**Gabriel Sewell (Sr.)**	30	Lawson Hall (Jr.)
LB	52	Kyle Adams (Sr.)	34	Josiah Bradley (Fr.)
CB	4	EJ Muhammad (Sr.)	15	Jaden Dedman (Fr.)
CB	**25**	**Daniel Brown (Sr.)**	3	Berdale Robins (Jr.)
S	20	Tyson Williams (So.)	5	Emany Johnson (Fr.)
S	28	Austin Arnold (Jr.)	33	JoJuan Claiborne (So.)
S	11	Daiyan Henley (Jr.)	8	Kaymen Cureton (So.)
SPECIAL TEAMS				
K	35	Quinton Conaway (Sr.)	KR	3 Kaleb Fossum (Sr.)
P	48	Spencer Pettit (Sr.)	PR	3 Kaleb Fossum (Sr.)

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Cristian Solano, 45-23-200-4, 0 TDs
Rushing: Toa Taua, 178 att., 872 yds., 6 TDs
Receiving: Kaleb Fossum, 70 rec., 734 yds., 1 TD
Tackles: Gabriel Sewell, 91
Sacks: Lucas Weber, 5.5
Interceptions: Daniel Brown, Berdale Robins, 1

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Jay Norvell
Record at School: 11-14 (2 years)
Career Record: 11-14 (2 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Matt Mumme
Defensive Coordinator: Jeff Casteel
Reno, NV • Mackay Stadium (30,000)

John Byrne/Nevada Athletics

San Diego State **Aztecs**

National Forecast: **63** • MW West Prediction: **2** • Projected Record: **8-4, 6-2 MW**

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	Weber State
Sept.	7	at UCLA
Sept.	14	at New Mexico State
Sept.	21	Utah State
Oct.	5	at Colorado State
Oct.	12	Wyoming
Oct.	19	at San Jose State
Oct.	26	at UNLV
Nov.	9	Nevada
Nov.	16	Fresno State
Nov.	23	at Hawaii
Nov.	30	BYU

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 7-6, 4-4 MW

Aug.	31	at Stanford	L	10-31
Sept.	8	Sacramento State	W	28-14
Sept.	15	Arizona State	W	28-21
Sept.	22	Eastern Michigan (ot)	W	23-20
Oct.	6	at Boise State	W	19-13
Oct.	12	Air Force	W	21-17
Oct.	20	San Jose State	W	16-13
Oct.	27	at Nevada	L	24-28
Nov.	3	at New Mexico	W	31-23
Nov.	10	UNLV	L	24-27
Nov.	17	at Fresno State	L	14-23
Nov.	24	Hawaii (ot)	L	30-31
Dec.	19	vs. Ohio #	L	0-27

#Frisco Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Justin Dinka, RB, Flower Mound, TX
2. Joey Capra, C, Auburn, CA
3. Brionne Penny, ATH, Norwalk, CA
4. Jeffrey Blake, DE, Norcross, GA
5. Michael Shawcroft, LB, San Diego, CA
6. Nassir Sims, DT, Goodyear, AZ
7. Kyron White, S, Fort Worth, TX
8. Brandon Crenshaw-Dickson, OT, Inglewood, CA
9. Anthony Landphere, TE, Mountain View, CA
10. Shawn Nielsen, DE, Newport, CA

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	MW	NATIONAL
Scoring	20.6 ppg	12	120
Rushing	161.7 ypg	6	74
Passing	187.2 ypg	8	101
Total	348.8 ypg	9	112
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**MW**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	22.2 ppg	4	32
Rushing	103.8 ypg	1	7
Passing	230.8 ypg	3	66
Total	334.6 ypg	3	21
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**MW**	**NATIONAL**
-3	-0.23	8	85

STAT CORNER

33

Unlucky bounces: SDSU recovered only 33 percent of all fumbles in 2018, second worst in FBS (ahead of only Florida State).

OFFENSE San Diego State is mixing up the look but sticking with the formula when it comes to its run-first offense. The Aztecs are switching to a spread attack, which means the quarterback will be lined up in the backfield instead of behind center. However, coach Rocky Long is adamant that handoffs to running backs — and not downfield throws — will remain the focal point of the attack.

San Diego State is hoping that the change will spruce up an offense that scored fewer than 20 points five times last season while averaging 20.6 points for the season. The Aztecs averaged 30.8 points in 2017.

Senior running back Juwan Washington will again be the feature back. He rushed for 999 yards and 10 touchdowns last season despite missing four games due to a fractured clavicle.

Senior quarterback Ryan Agnew started eight games but completed just 51.6 percent of his passes. He finished with 1,651 yards and 10 touchdowns.

The Aztecs don't possess a consistent producer at receiver, but junior Tim Wilson displayed signs he could develop into one by catching three touchdown passes and averaging 19.1 yards on 19 receptions. Wilson missed spring drills with a foot injury but is expected to be healthy entering the season.

Junior center Keith Ismael, a first-team All-Mountain West selection last season, anchors the offensive line. He missed the spring due to shoulder surgery but is expected to be ready for fall camp.

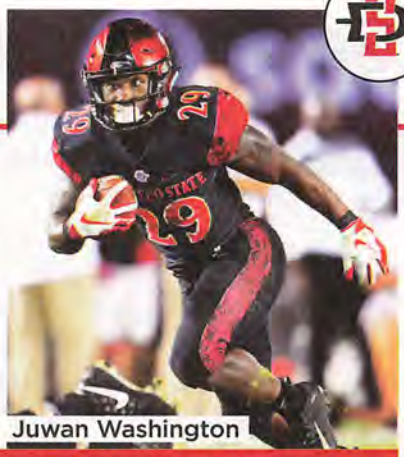
DEFENSE Senior middle linebacker Kyahva Tezino is the leader after a huge 2018 campaign in which he racked up 127 tackles and 8.5 sacks. The first-team All-Mountain West selection figures to at least equal that output this season. He is flanked by sophomore Caden McDonald and junior Andrew Aleki.

The secondary is strong with second-team all-conference pick Tariq Thompson back at safety. Thompson, a junior, is a playmaker with seven interceptions and three forced fumbles in two seasons. Juniors Tayler Hawkins and Trenton Thompson also are solid safeties, while senior Luq Barcoo and sophomore Darren Hall are the probable starting cornerbacks.

The defensive front is a work in progress. Jonah Tavai, a junior college transfer slated to arrive for fall camp, may make a run at the starting tackle position.

SPECIALISTS Redshirt freshman Matt Araiza will be the new placekicker, and he must replace John Baron II, who ranks second in school history with 50 field goals and had a reputation for delivering in the clutch. Junior Brandon Heicklen is entering his third season as a punter after averaging 41.8 yards per boot and placing 26-of-68 punts inside the 20-yard line last season. Washington has returned three kickoffs for touchdowns in his career in producing a 23.6-yard average.

FINAL ANALYSIS The Aztecs are attempting to bounce back from a relative down season (7–6) after going 32–9 over the previous three campaigns. A late-season swoon convinced Long that the pound-the-ball offense needed a change, but it remains to be seen whether the Aztecs can run the ball as efficiently from the spread as they did with the QB behind center. Keeping Washington healthy will be a major priority. San Diego State figures to compete with Fresno State for the MW West Division crown, but it doesn't have enough talent to contend for a New Year's Six bowl bid.



Juwan Washington

"They're gonna be pissed off about how they finished the season. Rocky (Long) is a hard-nosed dude. They are always so tough on defense."

— An opposing MW assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

Returning Starters in Bold

OFFENSE (6)				
WR	92	Kobe Smith (So.)	96	Elijah Kothe (So.)
WR	**81**	**Ethan Dedeaux (So.)**	6	Tim Wilson (Jr.)
LT	71	Kyle Spalding (Jr.)	76	Zachary Thomas (Jr.)
LG	**79**	**Daishawn Dixon (Sr.)**	75	Desmond Bessent (So.)
C	**60**	**Keith Ismael (Jr.)**	**56**	**Dominic Gudino (Jr.)**
RG	73	William Dunkle (Fr.)	64	Chris Martinez (So.)
RT	77	Jacob Capra (Jr.)	99	Justin Yi (Fr.)
TE	**82**	**Parker Houston (Sr.)**	88	Daniel Bellinger (So.)
QB	9	Ryan Agnew (Sr.)	4	Jordon Brookshire (Jr.)
RB	**29**	**Juwan Washington (Sr.)**	22	Chase Jasmin (Jr.)
FB	35	Grady Vazquez (Jr.)	32	Connor McBride (So.)
DEFENSE (5)				
DE	58	Connor Mitchell (So.)	65	Cameron Thomas (Fr.)
DT	68	Myles Cheatum (Sr.)		Jonah Tavai (So.)
DE	57	Keshawn Banks (So.)	52	Jalil Lecky (Jr.)
LB	54	Caden McDonald (So.)	**42**	**Troy Cassidy (Sr.)**
MLB	**44**	**Kyahva Tezino (Sr.)**	47	Kaelin Himphill (Jr.)
LB	38	Andrew Aleki (Jr.)	43	Seyddrick Lakalaka (So.)
CB	16	Luq Barcoo (Sr.)	15	Cedarious Barfield (Jr.)
CB	23	Darren Hall (So.)	13	Nolen Harris (Fr.)
NB	36	Dwayne Johnson Jr. (Jr.)	20	Rashad Scott (So.)
S	32	Tayler Hawkins (Jr.)	**18**	**Trenton Thompson (Jr.)**
S	**14**	**Tariq Thompson (Jr.)**	**27**	**Kyree Woods (Sr.)**
SPECIAL TEAMS				
K	2	Matt Araiza (Fr.)	**KR** 29	Juwan Washington (Sr.)
P	59	Brandon Heicklen (Sr.)	**PR** 15	Jordan Byrd (So.)

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Ryan Agnew, 223-115-1,651-6, 10 TDs
Rushing: Juwan Washington, 199 att., 999 yds., 10 TDs
Receiving: Ethan Dedeaux, 22 rec., 262 yds., 0 TDs
Tackles: Kyahva Tezino, 127
Sacks: Kyahva Tezino, 8.5
Interceptions: Darren Hall, Tariq Thompson, 2

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Rocky Long
Record at School: 71-35 (8 years)
Career Record: 136-104 (19 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Jeff Horton
Defensive Coordinator: Zach Arnett
San Diego, CA • SDCCU Stadium (54,000)

Ernie Anderson/SDSU Athletics

San Jose State **Spartans**

National Forecast: **118** • MW West Prediction: **6** • Projected Record: **2-10, 1-7 MW**

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	29	Northern Colorado
Sept.	7	Tulsa
Sept.	21	at Arkansas
Sept.	28	at Air Force
Oct.	5	New Mexico
Oct.	12	at Nevada
Oct.	19	San Diego State
Oct.	26	at Army
Nov.	2	Boise State
Nov.	9	at Hawaii
Nov.	23	at UNLV
Nov.	30	Fresno State

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 1-11, 1-7 MW

Aug.	30	UC Davis	L	38-44
Sept.	8	at Washington State	L	0-31
Sept.	15	at Oregon	L	22-35
Sept.	29	Hawaii (ot)	L	41-44
Oct.	6	Colorado State	L	30-42
Oct.	13	vs. Army #	L	3-52
Oct.	20	at San Diego State	L	13-16
Oct.	27	UNLV	W	50-37
Nov.	3	at Wyoming	L	9-24
Nov.	10	at Utah State	L	24-62
Nov.	17	Nevada	L	12-21
Nov.	24	at Fresno State	L	13-31

#Santa Clara

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Darrin Smith, RB, Frisco, TX
2. B.J. Johnson, S, Santa Rosa, CA
3. Dominick Mazotti, TE, Pleasanton, CA
4. Stan Livingstone, CB, Carson, CA
5. Malikhi Miller, WR, Oakland, CA
6. Justin Scrempos, OT, Milpitas, CA
7. Alec Trujillo, QB, Fresno, CA
8. Chad Earle, CB, Seneca, SC*
9. Adi Anderson, RB, Oakland, CA
10. Jamar Simpson, WR, Moreno Valley, CA

*junior college transfer

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	MW	NATIONAL
Scoring	21.3 ppg	10	117
Rushing	61.5 ypg	12	130
Passing	262.2 ypg	7	32
Total	323.7 ypg	12	123
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**MW**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	36.6 ppg	10	115
Rushing	211.2 ypg	10	107
Passing	283.9 ypg	12	127
Total	495.1 ypg	12	126
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**MW**	**NATIONAL**
+1	+0.08	5	57

STAT CORNER

4

The SJSU run game lacked explosiveness. The Spartans managed just four rushes of 20-plus yards all season, fewest in FBS.

OFFENSE The bad news: San Jose State ranked 117th in the nation in scoring (21.3 ppg) and last in rushing (61.5 ypg) during a one-win season in 2018. The good news (we swear, there is good news): Quarterback Josh Love is back as a fifth-year senior, and if he continues to progress as he has each season of his career, the Spartans will have an offense capable of winning multiple games and taking some pressure off the defense.

The key will be the protection for Love, who lasted just eight games last season after getting knocked around behind a shaky offensive line. When Love stayed clean, the pocket passer connected on 56 percent of his passes with 14 TDs and nine INTs, and he threw for over 330 yards twice. But he was sacked 18 times during his eight games and ended the season on the sideline.

Love lost some experience at wide receiver but returns two players in Tre Walker (18.3 ypc) and Bailey Gaither (20.4 ypc) who were explosive in 2018. Leading rusher Tyler Nevens is back, and the staff is excited about freshman Kairee Robinson, but the success of the offense rides on the offensive line, which features four returning starters and Quinn Oseland, a grad transfer from Minnesota who was a reserve for the Gophers.

DEFENSE The numbers on the defensive side of the ball were not much better. The Spartans were not in the top 100 in any major statistical category and ranked No. 115 in the most important one — scoring defense (36.6 ppg). The team's top two tacklers return at linebacker, however. Seniors Ethan Aguayo and Jesse Osuna are back after combining for 199 tackles, 14 TFLs, three interceptions, three fumble recoveries and six pass break-ups. The duo will be the centerpiece of a unit that should be improved.

The defensive line looks like it will have nine rotational players for the first time. Defensive end Cade Hall earned a starting spot in the fifth game and could be on his way to all-league honors if he continues to improve. The secondary lost its two starting corners, but several players have starting experience on the backline. Sophomores Tre White and Nehemiah Shelton will start alongside two veteran safeties.

SPECIALISTS The Spartans are starting over, with the kicker, punter, holder and long snapper all departed in addition to all-league punt returner Thai Cottrell. Walk-on Matthew Mercurio spent his freshman year as a backup and appears to have won the placekicking duties in the spring. At punter, Yale grad transfer (and Australia native) Alex Galland is swapping coasts and taking over. And Isaiah Hamilton will be one of the top candidates at both punt and kick returner, along with Zamore Zigler.

FINAL ANALYSIS The trend has not been a positive one for San Jose State, as the wins have decreased from six to four to two to one over the last four seasons. Coach Brent Brennan is in his third season, and he has been touting what he believes will be a notable increase in overall team speed this season — and the spring scrimmages indeed were loaded with big plays on both the offensive and defensive sides of the ball. The schedule features games in five different time zones from Hawaii to Army but may not offer five chances at victory. Northern Colorado, New Mexico and UNLV probably represent the three best chances to win as the Spartans try to take baby steps up the Mountain West ladder.

Josh Love

"(Brent) Brennan is a really great coach, but they're not supporting him. They have some talent, but they are a long way from being a threat."

— An opposing MW assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

Returning Starters in Bold

OFFENSE (6)				
WR	84	Bailey Gaither (Sr.)	17	Leki Nunn (So.)
WR	10	Tre Walker (Jr.)	11	JaQuan Blackwell (Jr.)
WR	4	Antwaun Ayers (So.)	18	Austin Liles (Jr.)
LT	**55**	**Jack Snyder (Jr.)**	67	Korey Mariboho (Sr.)
LG	**79**	**Troy Kowalski (Sr.)**	70	Tyler Stevens (Fr.)
C	57	Trevor Robbins (Jr.)	**56**	**Kyle Hoppe (Jr.)**
RG	64	Jaime Navarro (Fr.)	62	Jesse Chamberlain (So.)
RT	76	Quinn Oseland (Sr.)	**78**	**Deano Motes (Sr.)**
TE	85	Brett Foley (Sr.)	81	Billy Humphreys (Jr.)
QB	**12**	**Josh Love (Sr.)**	8	Chance LaChapelle (Fr.)
RB	**23**	**Tyler Nevens (Jr.)**	21	DeJon Packer (Sr.)
DEFENSE (5)				
DE	91	E.J. Ane (So.)	95	Cameron Alexander (Jr.)
NT	97	Christian Johnson (Jr.)	96	Duane Tuitasi (Sr.)
DE	**92**	**Cade Hall (So.)**	98	Terrell Townsend (Jr.)
LB	**11**	**Jesse Osuna (Sr.)**	40	Isaak Togia (So.)
LB	28	Tysyn Parker (Jr.)	46	Christian Webb (Sr.)
LB	**31**	**Ethan Aguayo (Sr.)**	37	Isaiah Ossai (So.)
LB	8	Alii Matau (So.)	41	Hadari Darden (Sr.)
CB	20	Tre White (So.)	24	Zamore Zigler (Sr.)
CB	23	Nehemiah Shelton (So.)	12	Brandon Ezell (Sr.)
S	**3**	**Tre Webb (Jr.)**	34	Jalend Dinwiddie (So.)
S	**27**	**Jonathan Lenard Jr. (Jr.)**	14	Bobby Brown II (Jr.)
SPECIAL TEAMS				
K	39	Matthew Mercurio (Fr.)	**KR** 82	Isaiah Hamilton (Fr.)
P	43	Alex Galland (Sr.)	**PR** 82	Isaiah Hamilton (Fr.)

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Josh Love, 289-162-1,963-9, 14 TDs
Rushing: Tyler Nevens, 136 att., 554 yds., 4 TDs
Receiving: Tre Walker, 39 rec., 714 yds., 5 TDs
Tackles: Ethan Aguayo, 106
Sacks: Cade Hall, 3.0
Interceptions: Jesse Osuna, 2

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Brent Brennan
Record at School: 3-22 (2 years)
Career Record: 3-22 (2 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Kevin McGiven
Defensive Coordinator: Derrick Odum
San Jose, CA • CEFCU Stadium (30,456)

Terrell Lloyd/San Jose State Athletics

UNLV **Rebels**

National Forecast: **106** • MW West Prediction: **5** • Projected Record: **4-8, 2-6 MW**

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	Southern Utah
Sept.	7	Arkansas State
Sept.	14	at Northwestern
Sept.	28	at Wyoming
Oct.	5	Boise State
Oct.	12	at Vanderbilt
Oct.	19	at Fresno State
Oct.	26	San Diego State
Nov.	2	at Colorado State
Nov.	16	Hawaii
Nov.	23	San Jose State
Nov.	30	at Nevada

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 4-8, 2-6 MW

Sept.	1	at USC	L	21-43
Sept.	8	UTEP	W	52-24
Sept.	15	Prairie View A&M	W	46-17
Sept.	22	at Arkansas State	L	20-27
Oct.	6	New Mexico	L	14-50
Oct.	13	at Utah State	L	28-59
Oct.	19	Air Force	L	35-41
Oct.	27	at San Jose State	L	37-50
Nov.	3	Fresno State	L	3-48
Nov.	10	at San Diego State	W	27-24
Nov.	17	at Hawaii	L	28-35
Nov.	24	Nevada	W	34-29

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Vic Viramontes, LB, Norco, CA*
2. Travis Mumphrey, QB, Marrero, LA
3. Seth Robinson, LB, Scottsdale, AZ
4. Kyle Beaudry, LB, Las Vegas, NV
5. Naki Fahina, DE, Hawthorne, CA
6. Tavai Tuitasi, DE, San Francisco, CA*
7. Steve Jenkins, WR, Los Angeles, CA
8. Jacoby Windmon, LB, New Orleans, LA
9. Ryan Tantum, OT, Auburn, CA*
10. Jeremiah Houston, CB, Inglewood, CA*

*junior college transfer

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	MW	NATIONAL
Scoring	28.8 ppg	7	66
Rushing	224.3 ypg	2	19
Passing	166.8 ypg	10	114
Total	391.2 ypg	8	78
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**MW**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	37.3 ppg	12	120
Rushing	186.6 ypg	8	89
Passing	267.6 ypg	11	119
Total	454.2 ypg	10	115
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**MW**	**NATIONAL**
+1	+0.08	5	57

STAT CORNER

-1.2

UNLV averaged 5.3 yards per play and gave up 6.5 yards play. The difference of minus-1.2 per play ranked 115th in the nation.

OFFENSE Armani Rogers, who was the Mountain West's Freshman of the Year in 2017, returns for his third season as a starter after playing just six games last season because of a torn plantar plate in his right big toe. The 6'5", 225-pound Rogers is a dynamic runner who rushed for 565 yards on 6.1 yards per carry. But he has been erratic throwing the ball, with a 44.4 percent completion rate last season for 601 yards, 10 TDs and four interceptions.

Compounding matters for the passing game was the loss of the team's top returning receiving threat, Brandon Presley, to a torn ACL in spring practice. However, sophomore Tyleek Collins has game-breaking speed and joins returning starters Mekhi Stevenson and Darren Woods Jr. to form a solid unit.

The Rebels have finished 18th and 19th in the nation in rushing the last two seasons, respectively, but must replace two-time All-MW running back Lexington Thomas. Junior Charles Williams is the likely starter after gaining 332 yards on 65 carries as Thomas' backup last season. UNLV is also hoping that Cal transfer Biaggio Ali Walsh, the grandson of Muhammad Ali and the 2015 Nevada Player of the Year after helping lead nearby Bishop Gorman to its second consecutive mythical national title, will receive a waiver from the NCAA to be immediately eligible.

The offensive line, led by returning honorable mention All-MW guard Justin Polu, should be one of the league's best, with nine players with starting experience returning.

DEFENSE UNLV ranked last in the Mountain West in points allowed (37.3 ppg) and 10th in total defense (454.2 ypg). The Rebels have to make big gains on defense if they are to become bowl eligible for the first time since 2013.

The defensive line returns nose tackle Kolo Uasike and should get a boost with the return of versatile junior end Nick Dehdashtian from a Lisfranc fracture of his left foot that caused him to miss the entire 2018 campaign. Gabe McCoy, an all-conference candidate who had 13.5 tackles for a loss and four sacks, moves from linebacker to end.

Linebacker has been another major weakness in recent years, although senior Javin White, who had four interceptions and four forced fumbles, is an all-conference candidate as well.

Senior corner Jericho Flowers and strong safety Evan Austrie return to a secondary that gave up too many big plays, allowing 29 TDs and 267.6 passing yards per game.

SPECIALISTS Senior punter Hayes Hicken should vie for all-conference honors after averaging 43.8 yards, including 12 punts of 50 or more yards, to go with 16 inside the 20. Junior Daniel Gutierrez, who tied the school record with four field goals in a game in a 26–16 win at Fresno State in 2017, takes over placekicking duties after redshirting last season.

FINAL ANALYSIS It's bowl game or bust for fifth-year head coach Tony Sanchez. He received a soft vote of confidence from athletic director Desiree Reed-Francois, who said in a statement that she was looking forward to "a successful 2019 season including bowl eligibility." The schedule, which includes road games at Northwestern, Vanderbilt, Fresno State and Nevada and a home date with Boise State, makes that very iffy.

Armani Rogers

"They always look good, and they've been beating the best teams in the league for talent. They just can't seem to assemble them the right way."

— An opposing MW assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

Returning Starters in Bold

OFFENSE (7)				
WR	9	Tyleek Collins (So.)	85	Patrick Ballard (Fr.)
WR	**2**	**Mekhi Stevenson (Jr.)**	82	Elijah Trosclair (Jr.)
WR	**10**	**Darren Woods Jr. (Sr.)**	3	Drew Tejchman (Jr.)
LT	73	Ashton Morgan (So.)	77	Jackson McCullough (Jr.)
LG	72	Matt Brayton (Jr.)	51	Zack Singer (Sr.)
C	**70**	**Sid Acosta (Sr.)**	**65**	**Donovan Outlaw (Jr.)**
RG	**78**	**Justin Polu (Sr.)**	74	Julio Garcia (Jr.)
RT	71	Justice Oluwaseun (So.)	73	Ryan Tantum (Jr.)
TE	**45**	**Giovanni Fauolo (Jr.)**	11	Noah Bean (So.)
QB	**1**	**Armani Rogers (Jr.)**	6	Max Gilliam (Jr.)
RB	8	Charles Williams (Jr.)		Darran Williams (Jr.)
DEFENSE (5)				
DE	98	Nick Dehdashtian (Jr.)	91	Nate Neal (Jr.)
NT	**94**	**Kolo Uasike (Jr.)**	99	Chris Manoa (So.)
DT	55	Tavis Malakius (Jr.)	93	Dominion Ezinwa (Jr.)
DE	**25**	**Gabe McCoy (Sr.)**	47	Malcolm Johnson (Fr.)
OLB	43	Malakai Salu (Fr.)	22	Demetrious Gibbs (Sr.)
MLB	10	Vic Viramontes (Jr.)	53	Farrell Hester II (Jr.)
OLB	**16**	**Javin White (Sr.)**	15	Soli Afalava (Sr.)
CB	**7**	**Jericho Flowers (Sr.)**	28	Aaron Lewis (Jr.)
CB	14	Myles Plummer (Sr.)	31	Kyle Moses (So.)
FS	3	Drew Tejchman (Jr.)	5	Phillip Hill (Fr.)
SS	**17**	**Evan Austrie (Sr.)**	24	Bryce Jackson (So.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	32	Daniel Gutierrez (Jr.)	**KR** 9	Tyleek Collins (So.)
P	19	Hayes Hicken (Sr.)	**PR** 9	Tyleek Collins (So.)

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Max Gilliam, 226-125-1,394-8, 14 TDs
Rushing: Armani Rogers, 93 att., 565 yds., 8 TDs
Receiving: Tyleek Collins, 31 rec., 422 yds., 6 TDs
Tackles: Javin White, 74
Sacks: Gabe McCoy, 4.0
Interceptions: Javin White, 4

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Tony Sanchez
Record at School: 16-32 (4 years)
Career Record: 16-32 (4 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Barney Cotton
Defensive Coordinator: Tim Skipper
Las Vegas, NV • Sam Boyd Stadium (36,800)

UNLV Athletics

PAC-12 *Preview*

North	*Predicted Order of Finish*	South
1 *Washington* **HUSKIES** 11-2, 7-2 Pac-12		1 *Utah* **UTES** 10-3, 7-2 Pac-12
2 *Oregon* **DUCKS** 9-3, 7-2 Pac-12		2 *UCLA* **BRUINS** 7-5, 6-3 Pac-12
3 *Washington State* **COUGARS** 8-4, 5-4 Pac-12		3 *USC* **TROJANS** 6-6, 4-5 Pac-12
4 *Stanford* **CARDINAL** 7-5, 5-4 Pac-12		4 *Arizona State* **SUN DEVILS** 6-6, 4-5 Pac-12
5 *California* **GOLDEN BEARS** 6-6, 3-6 Pac-12		5 *Arizona* **WILDCATS** 6-6, 3-6 Pac-12
6 *Oregon State* **BEAVERS** 2-10, 1-8 Pac-12		6 *Colorado* **BUFFALOES** 4-8, 2-7 Pac-12

Pac-12 Championship: **Washington over Utah**

Games to Watch

AUG. 29
UTAH AT BYU
The Holy War will take place in late August. It's a huge early-season road test for a Utah team that has designs on winning the Pac-12.

AUG. 31
OREGON VS. AUBURN
Oregon QB Justin Herbert can make a statement on a national stage (AT&T Stadium in Arlington, Texas) against an elite Auburn defense.

SEPT. 7
STANFORD AT USC
The Cardinal defense — which held the Trojans to three points last year — will get its first look at the new USC attack under OC Graham Harrell.

SEPT. 14
OKLAHOMA AT UCLA
Beating the mighty Sooners will be a tall order, but expect Chip Kelly's team to make Oklahoma sweat — unlike last year.

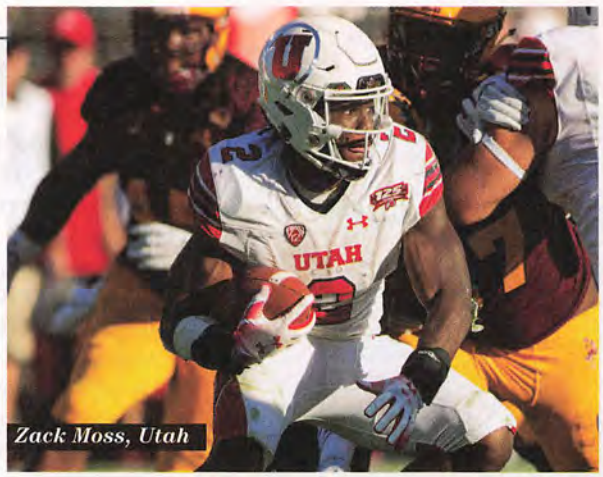
SEPT. 20
UTAH AT USC
The Utes head to USC for their Pac-12 opener. It's a stretch to call this a must win, but beating the Trojans on the road sure would be a nice start.

SEPT. 21
UCLA AT WASHINGTON STATE
Two of the game's great offensive minds — UCLA's Chip Kelly and Wazzu's Mike Leach — get together in Pullman.

Moss: Peter Brouillet; Scott: Craig Mitchelldyer

2019 Unit Rankings

	QB	RB	WR/TE	OL	DL	LB	DB
ARIZONA	4	4	11	6	11	4	8
ARIZONA STATE	10	2	8	4	10	2	5
CALIFORNIA	11	11	12	11	6	1	1
COLORADO	7	12	4	10	9	10	11
OREGON	1	3	7	1	4	3	4
OREGON STATE	12	5	5	12	12	12	12
STANFORD	2	9	10	8	5	11	10
UCLA	9	6	9	7	8	7	6
USC	6	8	1	9	2	6	9
UTAH	3	1	6	5	1	5	3
WASHINGTON	5	7	2	2	3	8	2
WASHINGTON STATE	8	10	3	3	7	9	7



Zack Moss, Utah

Recruiting by School

1. Oregon
2. Washington
3. USC
4. Stanford
5. Arizona State
6. UCLA
7. California
8. Colorado
9. Utah
10. Arizona
11. Washington State
12. Oregon State

2019 Bowl Projections

Rose Bowl: Washington vs. Ohio State

Holiday Bowl: Utah vs. Iowa

Alamo Bowl: Oregon vs. Texas

Las Vegas Bowl: Stanford vs. Boise State

Sun Bowl: UCLA vs. Florida State

Cheez-It Bowl: USC vs. Baylor

Redbox Bowl: Washington State vs. Minnesota

Jordon Scott, Oregon

Pac-12 Coordinator Carousel

California: Defense
New: Tim DeRuyter, Peter Sirmon
Old: Tim DeRuyter

Colorado: Offense
New: Jay Johnson
Old: Klayton Adams, Darrin Chiaverini

Colorado: Defense
New: Tyson Summers
Old: D.J. Eliot

Oregon: Defense
New: Andy Avalos, Keith Heyward
Old: Keith Heyward, Jim Leavitt

UCLA: Offense
New: Justin Frye
Old: Chip Kelly

USC: Offense
New: Graham Harrell
Old: Tee Martin

Utah: Offense
New: Andy Ludwig
Old: Troy Taylor

Washington: Offense
New: Bush Hamdan
Old: Bush Hamdan, Matt Lubick

OCT. 19
OREGON AT WASHINGTON
It's more fun when this rivalry means something — and if both teams live up to expectations, this game could decide the Pac-12 North title.

NOV. 2
UTAH AT WASHINGTON
Let's hope the rematch of the of the 2018 Pac-12 Championship Game — won by Washington 10–3 — is a bit more entertaining.

NOV. 23
UCLA AT USC
An otherwise lackluster Year 1 for Chip Kelly at UCLA was highlighted by a 34–27 win over USC. The Bruins would love to make it two straight.

NOV. 23
CALIFORNIA AT STANFORD
Stanford has won The Big Game nine straight times. It's about time for Justin Wilcox and the Golden Bears to snap this painful streak.

NOV. 29
ARIZONA AT ARIZONA STATE
Herm Edwards capped off his first regular season at Arizona State with a thrilling 41–40 win in Tucson. The rematch in Tempe will be heated.

NOV. 29
WASH. STATE AT WASHINGTON
Mike Leach knocked off Washington in his first season at Wazzu but has since lost six straight in the series — and the last few have been costly.

JT Daniels, USC

Pac-12 Returning Leaders

Passing	ATT	COMP	PCT	YDS	TD	INT	AVG/G
K.J. Costello, Stanford	413	269	65.1	3,540	29	11	272.3
JT Daniels, USC	363	216	59.5	2,672	14	10	242.9
Justin Herbert, Oregon	404	240	59.4	3,151	29	8	242.4

Rushing	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD	LONG	AVG/G
Eno Benjamin, Arizona State	300	1,642	5.5	16	49	126.3
J.J. Taylor, Arizona	255	1,434	5.6	6	64	119.5
Jermar Jefferson, Oregon State	239	1,380	5.8	12	62	115.0

Receiving	REC	YDS	AVG	TD	LONG	AVG/G
Laviska Shenault Jr., Colorado	86	1,011	11.8	6	89	112.3
Isaiah Hodgins, Oregon State	59	876	14.9	5	51	79.6
Michael Pittman Jr., USC	41	758	18.5	6	65	68.9

Tackles: Evan Weaver, California (158), Colin Schooler, Arizona (119)
Sacks: Bradlee Anae, Utah (8.0), Mustafa Johnson, Colorado (7.5)
Interceptions: Jaylinn Hawkins, California (6), Jevon Holland, Oregon (5)

2018 Pac-12 Standings

NORTH	PAC-12	OVERALL	SOUTH	PAC-12	OVERALL
Washington	7-2	10-4	Utah	6-3	9-5
Washington State	7-2	11-2	Arizona State	5-4	7-6
Stanford	6-3	9-4	USC	4-5	5-7
Oregon	5-4	9-4	Arizona	4-5	5-7
California	4-5	7-6	UCLA	3-6	3-9
Oregon State	1-8	2-10	Colorado	2-7	5-7

2018 Bowl Results

Cheez-It Bowl: TCU 10, California 7 (OT)

Las Vegas Bowl: Fresno State 31, Arizona State 20

Sun Bowl: Stanford 14, Pittsburgh 13

Redbox Bowl: Oregon 7, Michigan State 6

Alamo Bowl: Washington State 28, Iowa State 26

Holiday Bowl: Northwestern 31, Utah 20

Rose Bowl: Ohio State 28, Washington 23

2018 Pac-12 Team Stats & Rankings

Offense

	SCORING	RUSH	PASS	TOTAL
Arizona	31.3 (3)	202.4 (1)	255.3 (3)	457.7 (1)
Arizona State	29.9 (4)	184.0 (2)	232.7 (10)	416.7 (4)
California	21.5 (12)	157.3 (6)	186.2 (12)	343.5 (12)
Colorado	27.1 (7)	143.0 (9)	249.6 (4)	392.6 (8)
Oregon	34.8 (2)	179.4 (4)	247.8 (7)	427.2 (3)
Oregon State	26.1 (9T)	155.6 (7)	249.2 (5)	404.8 (6)
Stanford	28.4 (5)	107.9 (11)	273.1 (2)	381.0 (11)
UCLA	24.6 (11)	154.8 (8)	237.8 (9)	392.6 (9)
USC	26.1 (9T)	133.5 (10)	249.1 (6)	382.6 (10)
Utah	28.1 (6)	180.0 (3)	215.8 (11)	395.8 (7)
Washington	26.4 (8)	176.3 (5)	238.4 (8)	414.6 (5)
Washington State	37.5 (1)	77.7 (12)	373.8 (1)	451.5 (2)

Defense

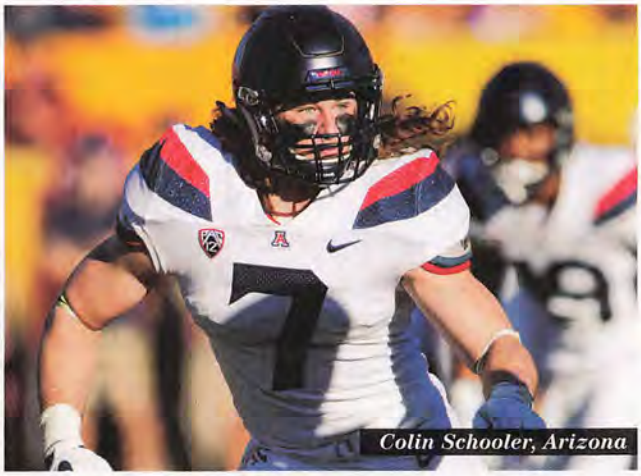
	SCORING	RUSH	PASS	TOTAL
Arizona	32.6 (10)	162.5 (8)	269.5 (12)	432.0 (10)
Arizona State	25.5 (7)	170.5 (10)	233.8 (6)	404.4 (8)
California	20.4 (3)	142.1 (4)	175.1 (1)	317.2 (3)
Colorado	27.3 (9)	145.6 (6)	234.7 (7)	380.3 (5)
Oregon	25.4 (6)	144.3 (5)	241.6 (8)	385.9 (6)
Oregon State	45.7 (12)	281.8 (12)	254.9 (10)	536.8 (12)
Stanford	22.9 (4)	146.1 (7)	264.0 (11)	410.1 (9)
UCLA	34.1 (11)	199.4 (11)	245.5 (9)	444.9 (11)
USC	27.0 (8)	164.8 (9)	223.3 (5)	388.0 (7)
Utah	19.4 (2)	100.3 (1)	215.3 (3)	315.6 (2)
Washington	16.4 (1)	116.1 (2)	190.1 (2)	306.2 (1)
Washington State	23.3 (5)	141.5 (3)	218.1 (4)	359.5 (4)

ALL-PAC-12 TEAM

First-Team Offense

QB	**Justin Herbert**	6-6	233	Sr.	Oregon
RB	**Eno Benjamin**	5-10	201	Jr.	Arizona State
RB	**Zack Moss**	5-10	215	Sr.	Utah
AP	**J.J. Taylor**	5-6	184	Jr.	Arizona
WR	**Michael Pittman Jr.**	6-4	225	Sr.	USC
WR	**Laviska Shenault Jr.**	6-2	225	Jr.	Colorado
TE	**Hunter Bryant**	6-2	241	Jr.	Washington
C	**Nick Harris**	6-1	302	Sr.	Washington
OL	**Trey Adams**	6-8	306	Sr.	Washington
OL	**Walker Little**	6-7	313	Jr.	Stanford
OL	**Penei Sewell**	6-6	345	So.	Oregon
OL	**Calvin Throckmorton**	6-5	318	Sr.	Oregon

Laviska Shenault Jr., Colorado


Colin Schooler, Arizona

First-Team Defense

DL	**Bradlee Anae**	6-3	263	Sr.	Utah
DL	**Leki Fotu**	6-5	327	Sr.	Utah
DL	**Mustafa Johnson**	6-2	290	Jr.	Colorado
DL	**Jay Tufele**	6-3	310	So.	USC
LB	**Troy Dye**	6-4	224	Sr.	Oregon
LB	**Colin Schooler**	6-0	236	Jr.	Arizona
LB	**Evan Weaver**	6-3	245	Sr.	California
CB	**Paulson Adebo**	6-1	189	So.	Stanford
CB	**Jaylon Johnson**	6-0	190	Jr.	Utah
S	**Ashtyn Davis**	6-1	195	Sr.	California
S	**Jalen Thompson**	6-0	195	Sr.	Washington State

First-Team Specialists

K	**Jet Toner**	6-4	201	Jr.	Stanford
P	**Steven Coutts**	6-4	215	Sr.	California
KR	**Travell Harris**	5-9	180	So.	Washington State
PR	**Britain Covey**	5-8	170	Jr.	Utah

SECOND-TEAM OFFENSE

QB	**K.J. Costello**	6-5	215	Jr.	Stanford
RB	**Jermar Jefferson**	5-10	216	So.	Oregon State
RB	**Joshua Kelley**	5-11	204	Sr.	UCLA
AP	**Britain Covey**	5-8	170	Jr.	Utah
WR	**Aaron Fuller**	5-11	183	Sr.	Washington
WR	**Theo Howard**	6-0	182	Sr.	UCLA
TE	**Colby Parkinson**	6-7	240	Jr.	Stanford
C	**Jake Hanson**	6-5	297	Sr.	Oregon
OL	**Cohl Cabral**	6-5	291	Sr.	Arizona State
OL	**Shane Lemieux**	6-4	317	Sr.	Oregon
OL	**Abraham Lucas**	6-7	320	So.	Washington State
OL	**Darrin Paulo**	6-5	318	Sr.	Utah

SECOND-TEAM DEFENSE

DL	**Luc Bequette**	6-2	295	Sr.	California
DL	**Levi Onwuzurike**	6-3	287	Jr.	Washington
DL	**John Penisini**	6-2	318	Sr.	Utah
DL	**Jordon Scott**	6-1	329	Jr.	Oregon
LB	**Nate Landman**	6-3	230	Jr.	Colorado
LB	**Merlin Robertson**	6-3	235	So.	Arizona State
LB	**Jahad Woods**	6-0	225	Jr.	Washington State
CB	**Myles Bryant**	5-9	184	Sr.	Washington
CB	**Camryn Bynum**	6-0	190	Jr.	California
S	**Julian Blackmon**	6-1	190	Sr.	Utah
S	**Jaylinn Hawkins**	6-2	205	Sr.	California

SECOND-TEAM SPECIALISTS

K	**Brandon Ruiz**	5-10	174	Jr.	Arizona State
P	**Oscar Draguicevich III**	5-11	185	Jr.	Washington State
KR	**Ashtyn Davis**	6-1	195	Sr.	California
PR	**Tyler Vaughns**	6-2	185	Jr.	USC

Theo Howard
UCLA

Max Borghi
Washington State

Jevon Holland
Oregon

Myles Bryant
Washington

THIRD-TEAM OFFENSE

QB	**Tyler Huntley**	6-1	200	Sr.	Utah
RB	**Salvon Ahmed**	5-11	193	Jr.	Washington
RB	**CJ Verdell**	5-9	209	So.	Oregon
AP	**Max Borghi**	5-10	195	So.	Washington State
WR	**Isaiah Hodgins**	6-4	203	Jr.	Oregon State
WR	**Tyler Vaughns**	6-2	185	Jr.	USC
TE	**Jacob Breeland**	6-5	248	Sr.	Oregon
C	**Frederick Mauigoa**	6-3	310	Sr.	Washington State
OL	**Jaxson Kirkland**	6-7	320	So.	Washington
OL	**Gus Lavaka**	6-4	358	Sr.	Oregon State
OL	**Donovan Laie**	6-4	315	So.	Arizona
OL	**Zach Robertson**	6-6	336	Sr.	Arizona State

THIRD-TEAM DEFENSE

DL	**Christian Rector**	6-4	275	Sr.	USC
DL	**Will Rodgers III**	6-5	250	Jr.	Washington State
DL	**Jovan Swann**	6-2	271	Jr.	Stanford
DL	**Marlon Tuipulotu**	6-3	305	So.	USC
LB	**Krys Barnes**	6-1	235	Sr.	UCLA
LB	**Jordan Fox**	6-3	227	Jr.	Stanford
LB	**Palaie Gaoteote IV**	6-2	250	So.	USC
CB	**Thomas Graham Jr.**	5-11	191	Jr.	Oregon
CB	**Darnay Holmes**	5-10	198	Jr.	UCLA
S	**Javelin Guidry**	5-9	186	Jr.	Utah
S	**Jevon Holland**	6-1	192	So.	Oregon

THIRD-TEAM SPECIALISTS

K	**JJ Molson**	6-1	185	Sr.	UCLA
P	**Michael Turk**	6-1	220	So.	Arizona State
KR	**Cameron Scarlett**	6-1	216	Sr.	Stanford
PR	**Ronnie Blackmon**	5-10	180	Jr.	Colorado

Daniels, Schooler, Howard: Peter Brouillet; Shenault: Jay Biggerstaff; Borghi: Tim Clark; Holland, Bryant: Craig Mitchelldyer

California **Golden Bears**

National Forecast: **57** • Pac-12 North Prediction: **5** • Projected Record: **6-6, 3-6 Pac-12**

Ashtyn Davis

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Justin Wilcox
Record at School: 12-13 (2 years)
Career Record: 12-13 (2 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Beau Baldwin
Defensive Coordinator: Tim DeRuyter, Peter Sirmon
Location: Berkeley, CA
Stadium: Memorial Stadium (62,467)

KEY GOLDEN BEARS

EVAN WEAVER, LB Relentless player keyed Cal's win over Washington with a 37-yard return of an interception for a touchdown.

CAMRYN BYNUM, CB Regarded as Cal's top cover man in a deep and experienced secondary. Had two interceptions and a team-best 10 pass breakups last season.

ASHTYN DAVIS, DB/KR Former high-hurdle star had four interceptions, including a pick-6, and also scored on an 89-yard kickoff return.

KEY LOSSES

PATRICK LAIRD, RB A workhorse the past two seasons, totaling 2,088 rushing yards, 96 catches and scoring 18 touchdowns.

JORDAN KUNASZYK, ILB Had 148 tackles last season to become Cal's first All-Pac-12 first-team defensive selection since 2011.

KANAWAI NOA, WR Noa was expected to be the team's most experienced wideout but opted to depart as a graduate transfer.

RISING STAR

Linebacker **KUONY DENG** was the Bears' top recruit, a versatile 6'6", 225-pounder from Independence (Kan.) Community College, which was featured on the Netflix series "Last Chance U" last season. Deng will start inside, but the staff sees potential on the edge in pass-rush situations.

The Bears made a tangible step forward in Year 2 of the Justin Wilcox era, assembling one of the Pac-12's best defensive units, posting seven wins — including one over conference champ Washington — and reaching the program's first bowl game since 2015.

The defense, which returns 13 players who started a combined 155 games last fall, figures to be as good or better than the unit that ranked third in the Pac-12 in both points and yards allowed per game.

Whether the Bears can match or exceed last year's standing in the tough Pac-12 North will depend largely on progress they make offensively. The quarterback duel between Chase Garbers and newcomer Devon Modster is expected to continue into fall camp, and Cal will be inexperienced at most other skill positions.

Unless Cal can substantially improve its scoring output from a year ago — when it was last in the Pac-12 at 21.5 points per game — even a formidable defense will carry this team only so far.

OFFENSE No game represented the 2018 Cal Bears more vividly than their 12–10 win over Washington. The Bears prevailed despite failing to score an offensive touchdown. Wilcox knows that that formula is not sustainable. Garbers passed for 1,506 yards and 14 touchdowns while starting 10 games last season, but he also threw 10 interceptions — and Cal was ineffective in the red zone. The Bears brought in Modster, who began his career at UCLA, to create competition, and Garbers seemed to respond to it during spring drills.

"My game is definitely at the highest it's been since I've been here," Garbers said during the spring. "Just that comfort level that I didn't necessarily have [last] fall."

Cal fans are familiar with Modster, a former four-star recruit who came off the bench to complete 14-of-18 passes for 191 yards in the Bruins' 30–27 win over the Bears two seasons ago.

Christopher Brown Jr., a bruising 6'1", 230-pound sophomore, seemed to secure the No. 1 running back slot in the spring before a left ankle injury sidelined him during the final week. Marcel Dancy and junior college transfer DeShawn Collins also figure in the mix at running back.

The Bears suffered huge losses at wide receiver, where Jordan Duncan and Jeremiah Hawkins are the top returnees. Cal anticipates immediate contributions from summer arrivals Trevon Clark and Kekoa Crawford, who both bring size to the position.

It all works only if the offensive line takes another step forward. Jake Curhan and Michael Saffell will lead a unit that otherwise remains fairly young.

DEFENSE Ultra-productive inside linebacker Evan Weaver and Cal's best secondary in decades will anchor a veteran defense. Weaver had 159 tackles last season, most by a returning FBS player, and scored Cal's only touchdown (on a pick-6) in the win over Washington. The

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	UC Davis
Sept.	7	at Washington
Sept.	14	North Texas
Sept.	21	at Ole Miss
Sept.	27	Arizona State
Oct.	5	at Oregon
Oct.	19	Oregon State
Oct.	26	at Utah
Nov.	9	Washington State
Nov.	16	USC
Nov.	23	at Stanford
Nov.	30	at UCLA

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 7-6, 4-5 PAC-12

Sept.	1	North Carolina		W	24-17
Sept.	8	at BYU		W	21-18
Sept.	15	Idaho State		W	45-23
Sept.	29	Oregon		L	24-42
Oct.	6	at Arizona		L	17-24
Oct.	13	UCLA		L	7-37
Oct.	20	at Oregon State		W	49-7
Oct.	27	Washington		W	12-10
Nov.	3	at Washington State		L	13-19
Nov.	10	at USC		W	15-14
Nov.	24	Colorado		W	33-21
Dec.	1	Stanford		L	13-23
Dec.	26	vs. TCU #	(ot)	L	7-10

#Cheez-It Bowl

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	PAC-12	NATIONAL
Scoring	21.5 ppg	12	116
Rushing	157.3 ypg	6	81
Passing	186.2 ypg	12	102
Total	343.5 ypg	12	115
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**PAC-12**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	20.4 ppg	3	22
Rushing	142.1 ypg	4	40
Passing	175.1 ypg	1	9
Total	317.2 ypg	3	15
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**PAC-12**	**NATIONAL**
-3	-0.23	7	85

2019 RECRUITS

1. Kuony Deng, LB, Aldie, VA*
2. Brett Johnson, DT, Phoenix, AZ
3. Orin Patu, LB, Seattle, WA
4. Spencer Brasch, QB, Gilbert, AZ
5. Ben Coleman, DT, Murrieta, CA
6. Braxten Croteau, DE, Peoria, AZ
7. McKade Mettauer, OG, The Woodlands, TX
8. Blake Antzoulatos, LB, Simi Valley, CA
9. Trevon Clark, WR, Victorville, CA*
10. Curley Young, LB, Pflugerville, TX
11. Kyle Smith, LB, Los Gatos, CA
12. Miles Williams, CB, Mansfield, TX
13. DeCarlos Brooks, RB, Chandler, AZ
14. Jaylen Martin, LB, Corona, CA
15. Elijah Mojarro, TE, Orange, CA
16. Myles Jernigan, LB, Grand Prairie, TX
17. Jawaun Johnson, WR, Norwich, CT*
18. Brayden Rohme, OT, Chandler, AZ
19. Devon Modster, QB, Mission Viejo, CA*
20. Makai Polk, WR, Richmond, CA
21. Ryan Puskas, LB, Peoria, AZ
22. Craig Woodson, S, Grand Prairie, TX
23. Brian Driscoll, OT, Encinitas, CA
24. DeShawn Collins, RB, Sacramento, CA*

*junior college transfer

Recruits ranked according to the 247SportsComposite

Peter Brouillet

ADVANCED STATS

5 Factors: College Football's Most Important Stats

Field Position[1]		Rank
Offense	31.3	30
Defense	27.7	24
Margin	**+3.6**	**29**

Efficiency[2]		Rank
Offense	39.4%	99
Defense	37.2%	20
Margin	**+2.2%**	**53**

Explosiveness[3]		Rank
Offense	4.9	121
Defense	4.6	9
Margin	**+0.3**	**63**

Finishing Drives[4]		Rank
Offense	3.4	129
Defense	4.2	39
Margin	**-0.8**	**118**

Adjusted TO Margin[5]		Rank
Projected	-3.1	96
Actual	-3	85
Margin	**+0.1**	**62**

KEY: 1-Average starting field position by yard line; **2**-Rate of successful plays (gaining 50% of necessary yards on 1st down, 70% on 2nd down, 100% on 3rd down); **3**-Explosiveness=yards per play; **4**-Points per trip inside 40-yard line; **5**-TO margin accounting for "luck" • Advanced stats provided by Bill Connelly of SB Nation

NUMBERS TO KNOW

+1.2

The Cal defense allowed 1.2 fewer yards per play in 2018 (4.6) than it had in 2017 (5.8). That was the largest such improvement of any power conference team.

37.2

Lots of third-and-longs: Cal's defense allowed the second-lowest success rate (percentage of plays that gained at least 50 percent of necessary yardage on first down, 70 percent on second, or 100 percent on third or fourth) in the conference at 37.2 percent, but the offense had the second lowest, too (39.4 percent).

+11/-14

Almost everyone's turnover margin is better in wins than losses, but Cal's turnover splits were stark: The Bears had a plus-11 margin in seven wins in 2018 and were minus-14 in six losses. They were 5–0 with a positive margin, 2–5 otherwise.

Bears were second nationally with 21 interceptions, and players who accounted for 20 of those are back, including safeties Jaylinn Hawkins (six) and Ashtyn Davis (four) and cornerbacks Camryn Bynum (two) and Elijah Hicks (one).

The Bears will benefit from the return of outside linebacker Cameron Goode, who had a pick-6 in the Week 1 win over North Carolina before suffering a season-ending knee injury. Goode, now up to 233 pounds, appeared fully healthy in the spring.

Newcomer Kuony Deng could fill Jordan Kunaszyk's inside linebacker spot next to Weaver, and the coaching staff has high hopes for sophomore nose guards Aaron Maldonado and Siulagisipai Fuimaono, who will compete to secure the job held last season by Chris Palmer.

Defensive end Luc Bequette says the Bears expect to take another step after allowing an average of just 14.9 points over the final seven games. "We want to be No. 1 in the Pac-12 in defense and hopefully not even close," he says. "After that, top-10 defense in the nation."

SPECIALISTS Punter Steven Coutts averaged 41.5 yards and placed 37 kicks inside the 20-yard line. Placekicker Greg Thomas converted 12-of-17 field goal tries (missing just twice inside 40 yards) and was perfect on 32 extra points. Davis, a former track-and-field All-American, averaged 26.2 yards on kick returns and had an 89-yarder for a touchdown against Idaho State. The coaching staff hopes improved depth throughout the roster will translate to better overall play on coverage and return teams.

FINAL ANALYSIS Defense should keep Cal in every game. Just two seasons after allowing 43 points or more nine times, the Bears gave up more than 24 points just twice last season. The problem is the Bears were so feeble offensively that they lost four times when they surrendered 24 points or fewer, including their 10–7 overtime defeat to TCU in the Cheez-It Bowl.

The schedule is challenging, with road games vs. Ole Miss, Washington, Oregon, Utah, Stanford and UCLA. And the Cal offense remains a major question mark. Until and unless that improves, it's hard to imagine the Bears making much headway in the Pac-12 North.

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (4)

WR	2	Jordan Duncan (Sr.)		Trevon Clark (Jr.)
WR	10	Jeremiah Hawkins (Jr.)	86	Monroe Young (Fr.)
WR	4	Nikko Remigio (So.)		Kekoa Crawford (Jr.)
LT	75	Will Craig (So.)	76	Henry Bazakas (Sr.)
LG	64	Gentle Williams (Jr.)	70	Poutasi Poutasi (So.)
C	**53**	**Michael Saffell (Jr.)**	65	Tanner Pronovost (Jr.)
RG	**61**	**Valentino Daltoso (Jr.)**	73	Matthew Cindric (Fr.)
RT	**71**	**Jake Curhan (Jr.)**	78	Brandon Mello (Fr.)
TE	84	Gavin Reinwald (So.)	82	McCallan Castles (Fr.)
QB	**7**	**Chase Garbers (So.)**	6	Devon Modster (Jr.)
RB	34	Christopher Brown Jr. (So.)	23	Marcel Dancy (Jr.)

DEFENSE (7)

Returning Starters in Bold

DE	**93**	**Luc Bequette (Sr.)**	91	Chinedu Udeogu (Jr.)
NG	99	Siulagisipai Fuimaono (So.)	97	Aaron Maldonado (So.)
DE	44	Zeandae Johnson (Sr.)	55	Lone Toailoa (Sr.)
OLB	19	Cameron Goode (Jr.)	43	Deon White (Sr.)
ILB	**89**	**Evan Weaver (Sr.)**	54	Evan Tattersall (Fr.)
ILB	42	Colt Doughty (Sr.)	8	Kuony Deng (Jr.)
OLB	**96**	**Tevin Paul (Jr.)**	52	Nick Alftin (Fr.)
CB	**24**	**Camryn Bynum (Jr.)**	22	Traveon Beck (Sr.)
CB	**3**	**Elijah Hicks (Jr.)**	20	Josh Drayden (Sr.)
S	**27**	**Ashtyn Davis (Sr.)**	32	Daniel Scott (So.)
S	**6**	**Jaylinn Hawkins (Sr.)**	5	Trey Turner III (Sr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	39	Greg Thomas (Sr.)	KR	27	Ashtyn Davis (Sr.)
P	37	Steven Coutts (Sr.)	PR	4	Nikko Remigio (So.)

2018 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Chase Garbers	**260**	**159**	**1,506**	**14**	**10**
Brandon McIlwain	**129**	**80**	**763**	**2**	**8**

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD
Patrick Laird	223	961	4.3	5
Chase Garbers	**98**	**420**	**4.3**	**2**
Brandon McIlwain	**79**	**403**	**5.1**	**4**
Christopher Brown Jr.	**37**	**148**	**4.0**	**1**

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Patrick Laird	51	288	5.6	4
Vic Wharton III	50	502	10.0	1
Moe Ways	34	383	11.3	1
Kanawai Noa	30	369	12.3	2

KICKING: Greg Thomas, 12-17 FGs, 68 pts.

TACKLES: Evan Weaver, 159; Jordan Kunaszyk, 148

SACKS: Luc Bequette, 5.0; Alex Funches, 5.0

INTERCEPTIONS: Jaylinn Hawkins, 6

Returning Players in **Bold**

SCOUTING THE GOLDEN BEARS

OPPOSING COACHES SIZE UP CALIFORNIA

"You're seeing the product of really excellent defensive calls. They're executing on defense better and faster than anyone expected. It's a total turnaround in philosophy from what Sonny Dykes was doing there with more or less the same kind of roster. … They have some stout, big bodies clogging up the run. The outside linebackers are physical enough to play defensive line at some other places. … The secondary is really the soul of the team's attitude. They press, they play really physically and bother you, and they're extremely well coached for one on one. … It's not really old school, pound-the-rock offense, but there's definitely a sense that they're serving the defense. They're not trying to get 100 plays in anymore. They want to control possession more, and if they're playing that well up front on defense, it makes sense to limit possessions. All of a sudden it's a nightmare for opposing offenses, you're losing chances to score. … On the flip side they have to score more points. They need stronger play out of their QB (Chase Garbers), and they need to find a better passing offense. They're not strong at receiver; they're not really exceptional anywhere on offense. … Justin Wilcox could be there for a long time. He really gets that place, the way that (Jeff) Tedford did, and he's done a really nice job recruiting the Bay Area kids."

Oregon **Ducks**

National Forecast: **15** • Pac-12 North Prediction: **2** • Projected Record: **9-3, 7-2 Pac-12**

Justin Herbert

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Mario Cristobal
Record at School: 9-5 (1+ year)
Career Record: 36-52 (7+ years)
Offensive Coordinator: Marcus Arroyo
Defensive Coordinators: Andy Avalos, Keith Heyward
Location: Eugene, OR
Stadium: Autzen Stadium (54,000)

KEY DUCKS

JUSTIN HERBERT, QB Projected as the potential No. 1 overall pick in the draft had he left early, Herbert opted to stay for his senior season.

TROY DYE, ILB Dye is a heady defender playing under his third coordinator in four years.

PENEI SEWELL, OT Injured in the overtime win over Washington that capped Oregon's 5–1 start to 2018, Sewell remained sidelined as the Ducks finished 3–3 to wrap up the regular season.

KEY LOSSES

DILLON MITCHELL, WR Mitchell did his part with a school-record 1,184 receiving yards before entering the draft as a junior.

UGOCHUKWU AMADI, DB The versatile member of the secondary thrived in the nickel position.

JALEN JELKS, DE/OLB Jelks teamed with Justin Hollins to give the Ducks two playmakers who could get after the quarterback.

RISING STAR

KAYVON THIBODEAUX, a defensive end, was the top-rated recruit ever to sign with Oregon — indeed, the No. 1 recruit in the nation according to ESPN. He demonstrated exceptional explosiveness along with a high football IQ when he got to campus in January.

Oregon's dramatic rise to national prominence featured an even faster fall when, two years after playing in the inaugural College Football Playoff championship game, the Ducks went 4–8 in 2016. Three years after that, the Ducks are poised to rebound almost as quickly, with a veteran-laden roster attracting preseason top-15 rankings and consideration as a CFB Playoff contender.

The primary fuel for the hype is senior quarterback Justin Herbert, who passed up the possibility of being the No. 1 overall draft pick and stayed in school for his fourth season. He'll play behind an offensive line that returns more than 150 career starts, and the skill positions are deep, if not marked by elite talent. Defensively, Andy Avalos was poached from Boise State to remake a unit that slipped slightly from 2017 to '18.

The Ducks open the year at AT&T Stadium in Arlington, Texas, against Auburn. The hype will be huge for that game, and Oregon's playoff chances could hinge on its outcome. "We're not going to let outside pressure affect us, and we're not going to worry about what anyone else is saying," Herbert says. "We're just going to focus in-house and worry about what we have to say."

OFFENSE Herbert is a soft-spoken hometown kid. So in that regard, it made some sense that he wanted one more year to hone his game and prepare for the harsh spotlight attracted by NFL quarterbacks. He's coming off a season in which he threw for 3,151 yards and 29 touchdowns but saw his completion percentage dip to 59.4, in no small part because receivers dropped what the Ducks tabulated as 52 passes in 13 games.

Despite the loss of Dillon Mitchell, who entered the draft after setting a school record with 1,184 receiving yards, Oregon believes it will be better catching the ball in 2019. Head coach Mario Cristobal hired long-time Utah State assistant Jovon Bouknight to coach receivers, and he brought a more cerebral, disciplined tone to the group. The position took a big step forward during spring practice when graduate transfer Juwan Johnson and true freshman Mycah Pittman enrolled; not only did they catch pretty much everything, but their presence also seemed to motivate vets Johnny Johnson III and Brenden Schooler, who had trouble hanging on to the ball in 2018.

The running game will benefit from all the experience on the offensive line. Left guard Shane Lemieux, center Jake Hanson and right tackle Calvin Throckmorton will be fourth-year starters, and the other spot on the right side will be manned by another experienced senior, either Dallas Warmack or Brady Aiello. The left tackle is Penei Sewell, a budding star whose absence in the second half of 2018 due to injury was acutely felt.

Running back CJ Verdell is a bowling ball between the tackles, and Travis Dye complements him as a jitterbug. Cyrus Habibi-Likio was a goal-line specialist in 2018 who worked hard to expand his role, and Darrian Felix had a promising spring after being injured in 2018. Top recruit Sean Dollars joins the mix in the fall.

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	vs. Auburn #
Sept.	7	Nevada
Sept.	14	Montana
Sept.	21	at Stanford
Oct.	5	California
Oct.	11	Colorado
Oct.	19	at Washington
Oct.	26	Washington State
Nov.	2	at USC
Nov.	16	Arizona
Nov.	23	at Arizona State
Nov.	30	Oregon State

#Arlington, TX

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 9-4, 5-4 PAC-12

Sept.	1	Bowling Green	W	58-24
Sept.	8	Portland State	W	62-14
Sept.	15	San Jose State	W	35-22
Sept.	22	Stanford	(ot) L	31-38
Sept.	29	at California	W	42-24
Oct.	13	Washington	(ot) W	30-27
Oct.	20	at Washington State	L	20-34
Oct.	27	at Arizona	L	15-44
Nov.	3	UCLA	W	42-21
Nov.	10	at Utah	L	25-32
Nov.	17	Arizona State	W	31-29
Nov.	23	at Oregon State	W	55-15
Dec.	31	vs. Michigan State #	W	7-6

#Redbox Bowl

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	PAC-12	NATIONAL
Scoring	34.8 ppg	2	25
Rushing	179.4 ypg	4	54
Passing	247.8 ypg	7	50
Total	427.2 ypg	3	41
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**PAC-12**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	25.4 ppg	6	48
Rushing	144.3 ypg	5	43
Passing	241.6 ypg	8	82
Total	385.9 ypg	6	55
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**PAC-12**	**NATIONAL**
+5	+0.38	3	35

2019 RECRUITS

1. Kayvon Thibodeaux, DE, Westlake Village, CA
2. Mykael Wright, CB, Valencia, CA
3. Jonah Tauanu'u, OT, Harbor City, CA
4. Mase Funa, ILB, Anaheim, CA
5. Mycah Pittman, WR, Calabasas, CA
6. Lance Wilhoite, WR, Nashville, TN
7. Sean Dollars, RB, Rancho Cucamonga, CA
8. Ge'mon Eaford, LB, Deerfield Beach, FL
9. Josh Delgado, WR, Carson, CA
10. Malaesala Aumavae-Laulu, OT, Hilo, HI*
11. Patrick Herbert, TE, Eugene, OR
12. Keyon Ware-Hudson, DT, Duarte, CA
13. Kristian Williams, DT, Memphis, TN
14. Sua'ava Poti, DT, Bellflower, CA
15. Trikweze Bridges, S, Lanett, AL
16. Cale Millen, QB, Snoqualmie, WA
17. Jayvaun Wilson, RB, Valencia, CA
18. Isaac Townsend, LB, Arvada, CO
19. JR Waters, WR, Oxnard, CA
20. Jamal Hill, S, Morrow, GA
21. Logan Sagapolu, C, Lehi, UT
22. DJ James, CB, Mobile, AL
23. Treven Ma'ae, DE, Kapolei, HI
24. Brandon Dorlus, DE, Deerfield Beach, FL
25. Dru Mathis, LB, Ventura, CA*
26. Camden Lewis, K, Cornelius, NC

*junior college transfer

Recruits ranked according to the 247SportsComposite

Craig Mitchelldyer

ADVANCED STATS

5 Factors: College Football's Most Important Stats

Field Position[1]		Rank
Offense	31.7	23
Defense	29.2	63
Margin	**+2.5**	**39**

Efficiency[2]		Rank
Offense	43.4%	49
Defense	39.9%	51
Margin	**+3.5%**	**45**

Explosiveness[3]		Rank
Offense	5.9	58
Defense	5.2	42
Margin	**+0.7**	**37**

Finishing Drives[4]		Rank
Offense	5.2	16
Defense	4.0	29
Margin	**+1.2**	**11**

Adjusted TO Margin[5]		Rank
Projected	5.2	27
Actual	5	34
Margin	**-0.2**	**65**

KEY: 1-Average starting field position by yard line; **2**-Rate of successful plays (gaining 50% of necessary yards on 1st down, 70% on 2nd down, 100% on 3rd down); **3**-Explosiveness=yards per play; **4**-Points per trip inside 40-yard line; **5**-TO margin accounting for "luck" • Advanced stats provided by Bill Connelly of SB Nation

NUMBERS TO KNOW

-0.5

Always playing catch-up: The Ducks' offense averaged just 5.5 yards per play on first downs (84th in FBS), and the defense allowed 6.0 (74th). The resulting minus-0.5-yard margin ranked 98th overall and second worst in the Pac-12.

162.8

What helps when you stink on first down? Being amazing on second! Justin Herbert completed 64 percent of his passes, with a 13-to-1 TD-to-INT ratio and a 162.8 passer rating, on second downs in 2018, sixth best among passers with at least 120 second-down attempts.

5.2

Oregon's offense grew more effective as it got close to the end zone — the Ducks averaged 5.2 points per scoring opportunity (first downs inside the opponent's 40), 16th in FBS and second in the Pac-12.

DEFENSE Oregon's defense showed remarkable resolve in the red zone in 2018, limiting opponents to field goals nearly 43 percent of the time. That helped mask some slippage in fundamentals like rushing yards allowed and third-down defense. Avalos will bring a more multiple, attacking style from Boise to Eugene.

The front will be more varied than Jim Leavitt's three-man look, taking advantage of the versatility of players such as Austin Faoliu, Gus Cumberlander and super recruit Kayvon Thibodeaux. The keystone will remain nose tackle Jordon Scott, though the Ducks would like to rotate him more frequently to keep him fresh and healthy.

Inside linebacker Troy Dye had 115 tackles last season — 50 more than anyone else on Oregon's defense. Next to him, Isaac Slade-Matautia was slowed by a shoulder injury in 2018 but looked like a rock during spring practice. Off the edge, senior La'Mar Winston Jr. is a passionate competitor at outside linebacker. The other bookend for Avalos is the hybrid Stud position, where senior Bryson Young blossomed in the spring, and where D.J. Johnson could be a factor.

The secondary features two third-year starters at cornerback in Thomas Graham Jr. and Deommodore Lenoir. They finished well as sophomores and will look to get off to faster starts as juniors. Free safety Jevon Holland is an absolute ball hawk, and the Ducks have a couple of very physical options at the other spot in Nick Pickett and Brady Breeze. Departed nickel back Ugochukwu Amadi left behind a big hole in the lineup that Verone McKinley III looks to fill.

SPECIALISTS The Ducks hope that true freshman Camden Lewis can solidify the team's placekicking, which has been inconsistent in recent years. He could get a look as the punter, too, Cristobal says.

FINAL ANALYSIS Oregon fans enjoyed dining at college football's head table during the Chip Kelly and Marcus Mariota years. A couple seasons of settling for table scraps has them hungry for more. Cristobal has energized the fan base with his staff's success in recruiting, giving Oregon that "cool" factor again. But it's a bottom-line game, and Duck fans want to see results in 2019 that are commensurate with their expectations.

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (12)

WR	9	**Brenden Schooler (Sr.)**	3	**Johnny Johnson III (Jr.)**
WR	30	**Jaylon Redd (Jr.)**	4	Mycah Pittman (Fr.)
WR	6	Juwan Johnson (Sr.)	80	Bryan Addison (Fr.)
LT	58	**Penei Sewell (So.)**	77	George Moore (Sr.)
LG	68	**Shane Lemieux (Sr.)**	78	Alex Forsyth (So.)
C	55	**Jake Hanson (Sr.)**	53	Ryan Walk (So.)
RG	75	**Dallas Warmack (Sr.)**	71	Malaesala Aumavae-Laulu (Jr.)
RT	54	**Calvin Throckmorton (Sr.)**	66	**Brady Aiello (Sr.)**
TE	84	Cam McCormick (Jr.)	27	**Jacob Breeland (Sr.)**
QB	10	**Justin Herbert (Sr.)**	12	Tyler Shough (Fr.)
RB	7	**CJ Verdell (So.)**	26	Travis Dye (So.)

DEFENSE (7)

Returning Starters in Bold

DE	5	Kayvon Thibodeaux (Fr.)	45	Gus Cumberlander (Sr.)
DT	34	**Jordon Scott (Jr.)**	51	**Gary Baker (Sr.)**
DE	99	Austin Faoliu (Jr.)	90	Drayton Carlberg (Sr.)
OLB	32	**La'Mar Winston Jr. (Sr.)**	29	Adrian Jackson (So.)
ILB	35	**Troy Dye (Sr.)**	54	Dru Mathis (Jr.)
ILB	41	Isaac Slade-Matautia (So.)	55	Sampson Niu (Jr.)
STUD	56	Bryson Young (Sr.)	7	D.J. Johnson (So.)
CB	4	**Thomas Graham Jr. (Jr.)**	23	Verone McKinley III (Fr.)
CB	6	**Deommodore Lenoir (Jr.)**	2	Mykael Wright (Fr.)
S	8	Jevon Holland (So.)	10	Steve Stephens (Fr.)
S	16	**Nick Pickett (Jr.)**	25	Brady Breeze (Jr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	49	Camden Lewis (Fr.)	**KR**	30	Jaylon Redd (Jr.)
P	42	Blake Maimone (Sr.)	**PR**	26	Travis Dye (So.)

2018 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Justin Herbert	**404**	**240**	**3,151**	**29**	**8**
Braxton Burmeister	10	5	43	0	0

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD
CJ Verdell	**202**	**1,018**	**5.0**	**10**
Travis Dye	**140**	**739**	**5.3**	**4**
Tony Brooks-James	57	306	5.4	4
Justin Herbert	**71**	**166**	**2.3**	**2**

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Dillon Mitchell	75	1,184	15.8	10
Jaylon Redd	**38**	**433**	**11.4**	**5**
CJ Verdell	**27**	**315**	**11.7**	**2**
Jacob Breeland	**24**	**377**	**15.7**	**2**

KICKING: Adam Stack, 6-10 FGs, 54 pts.

TACKLES: Troy Dye, 115; Kaulana Apelu, 65

SACKS: Justin Hollins, 6.5

INTERCEPTIONS: Jevon Holland, 5

Returning Players in **Bold**

SCOUTING THE DUCKS

OPPOSING COACHES SIZE UP OREGON

"It's Mario Cristobal's team now. He's done a really solid job so far working with a unique situation, and a lot of times last season they would be playing some good ball, but as you looked unit by unit you'd see, yeah, these kids have had three different head coaches in three years, and three really different ones. … I think Jim Leavitt is a great defensive football coach, but it was known that he wasn't Mario's guy. They came together when Willie Taggart was trying to build a superstar roster of assistants, and those two personalities just didn't work. … Andy Avalos will keep some of the 3-4, but they won't be a two-gap defense. They'll move around guys a lot more, show a lot of different looks. … They're going to go as far as Justin Herbert will take them. Getting him back, obviously it's huge, but it helps in a lot of different ways. They're going to be really strong throwing the football, but they've brought in a lot of young talent on offense that they can build around an experienced quarterback. … Mario is bringing SEC recruiting to the Pac-12, the way that Urban (Meyer) brought it to the Big Ten. He's done a really good job outworking other programs, and they're loaded up. I think they're still a little shaky in terms of a conference favorite, because they're raw and not as deep as a Washington."

Oregon State **Beavers**

National Forecast: **95** • Pac-12 North Prediction: **6** • Projected Record: **2-10, 1-8 Pac-12**

Jermar Jefferson

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Jonathan Smith
Record at School: 2-10 (1 year)
Career Record: 2-10 (1 year)
Offensive Coordinator: Brian Lindgren
Defensive Coordinator: Tim Tibesar
Location: Corvallis, OR
Stadium: Reser Stadium (43,363)

KEY BEAVERS

JERMAR JEFFERSON, RB The consensus Freshman All-American finished ninth in the country in rushing yards in 2018.

ISAIAH HODGINS, WR Former four-star recruit has the size (6'4", 203) to be an All-Pac-12 weapon following breakout sophomore season.

BLAKE BRANDEL, OT Brandel, now a senior, has been the Beavers' bedrock on the offensive line. The Oregon native started all 36 games over the past three seasons.

KEY LOSSES

TIMMY HERNANDEZ, WR The reliable veteran was the Beavers' second-leading receiver each of the last two seasons.

KALANI VAKAMEILALO, DT He started 24 consecutive games — nearly twice as many as any other defender on the roster.

DWAYNE WILLIAMS, DB Williams was consistently one of the Beavers' fastest players and was a force at nickel back when healthy.

RISING STAR

Linebacker **AVERY ROBERTS** was one of two true freshmen to play for Nebraska in 2017 before transferring to Oregon State, where he has rejoined forces with linebackers coach Trent Bray. The sophomore will have the chance to make an immediate impact.

Coach Jonathan Smith enters the second year of "The Return," which is how his alma mater has billed the return of the record-setting former Oregon State quarterback to Corvallis.

In some ways, the Beavers looked dramatically improved from the 2017 season, when head coach Gary Andersen left unexpectedly in the middle of a 1–11 season. They snapped a 22-game road losing streak and looked much more capable on offense. Other struggles continued, though, and defense continued to be an Achilles heel as OSU finished 2–10.

But Oregon State has added a bevy of transfers since Smith's arrival, which could pay dividends as the former Chris Petersen assistant attempts to get the Beavers back to bowl eligibility for the first time in six years.

OFFENSE Jake Luton returns for a sixth year of eligibility — his third season at Oregon State — following two years in which the 6'7" senior displayed a big arm but played only 12 games due to injuries. Luton played well in stretches last season (10 touchdowns, four interceptions) but is expected to be challenged for his starting role by Nebraska transfer Tristan Gebbia, a former four-star recruit who is eligible after sitting out in 2018.

Whichever signal caller gets the start will have the benefit of playing with one of the Pac-12's rising stars in the backfield. Jermar Jefferson rushed for 1,380 yards (on 5.8 yards per carry) and 12 touchdowns, setting the Oregon State true freshman record for rushing yards in a season. He will have support from senior Artavis Pierce (408 rushing yards and four touchdowns), who dealt with injuries while taking a back seat to Jefferson last season.

Junior wide receiver Isaiah Hodgins (59 catches, 876 yards, five touchdowns) returns as the Beavers' leading pass catcher. The rangy 6'4" wideout has shown the potential that made him one of the top targets of Andersen's final OSU recruiting class, despite playing with four different starting quarterbacks in two years. He'll be joined by 5'9" former four-star recruit and (like Gebbia) Nebraska transfer Tyjon Lindsey, as well as senior Trevon Bradford (56 catches, 649 yards, six touchdowns), who along with Hodgins helped Oregon State jump from ninth in Pac-12 passing offense to fifth last season.

Oregon State schemed more creatively under Smith and offensive coordinator Brian Lindgren. But while the Beavers progressed in the passing game, it came with a price. They allowed a nation-high 48 sacks and will be tasked with finding three new starters on the offensive line in 2018. Smith has noted that a number of the 48 sacks came from the desire to take chances by extending plays.

DEFENSE Oregon State's defensive woes have now spanned three different coaching staffs over the course of the decade. Last year was rock bottom, as the Beavers finished 129th of 130 FBS teams in both scoring defense (45.7 ppg) and total defense (536.8 ypg).

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	30	Oklahoma State
Sept.	7	at Hawaii
Sept.	14	Cal Poly
Sept.	28	Stanford
Oct.	5	at UCLA
Oct.	12	Utah
Oct.	19	at California
Nov.	2	at Arizona
Nov.	8	Washington
Nov.	16	Arizona State
Nov.	23	at Washington State
Nov.	30	at Oregon

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 2-10, 1-8 PAC-12

Sept.	1	at Ohio State	L	31-77
Sept.	8	Southern Utah	W	48-25
Sept.	15	at Nevada	L	35-37
Sept.	22	Arizona	L	14-35
Sept.	29	at Arizona State	L	24-52
Oct.	6	Washington State	L	37-56
Oct.	20	California	L	7-49
Oct.	27	at Colorado (ot)	W	41-34
Nov.	3	USC	L	21-38
Nov.	10	at Stanford	L	17-48
Nov.	17	at Washington	L	23-42
Nov.	23	Oregon	L	15-55

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	PAC-12	NATIONAL
Scoring	26.1 ppg	9	91
Rushing	155.6 ypg	7	85
Passing	249.2 ypg	5	47
Total	404.8 ypg	6	67
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**PAC-12**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	45.7 ppg	12	129
Rushing	281.8 ypg	12	129
Passing	254.9 ypg	10	101
Total	536.8 ypg	12	129
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**PAC-12**	**NATIONAL**
-10	-0.83	11	120

2019 RECRUITS

1. Omar Speights, LB, Philadelphia, PA
2. Taron Madison, RB, Banning, CA
3. Luke Musgrave, TE, Bend, OR
4. Jojo Forest, CB, Orange, CA
5. Akili Arnold, S, Lake Forest, CA
6. Evan Bennett, DT, Santa Ana, CA
7. Jordan Whittley, DT, Richmond, CA*
8. Wynston Russell, CB, Chicago, IL
9. Cory Stover, DE, Coos Bay, OR
10. Kelsen Hennessy, DT, Clackamas, OR
11. Ryan Franke, LB, Camarillo, CA
12. Anthony Gould, WR, Salem, OR
13. Alex Austin, CB, Long Beach, CA
14. James Rawls, DE, Inglewood, CA*
15. Simon Sandberg, DE, Karlstad, Sweden*
16. Michael Erhart, LB, West Hills, CA
17. Jacob Ferenczi, OT, Gardiner, OR
18. Robin Vanderlaan, OT, Orinda, CA*
19. Thomas Sio, C, Anchorage, AK

*junior college transfer

Recruits ranked according to the 247SportsComposite

Karl Maasdam/Oregon State Athletics

ADVANCED STATS

5 Factors: College Football's Most Important Stats

Field Position[1]		Rank
Offense	28.3	105
Defense	31.0	104
Margin	-2.7	100

Efficiency[2]		Rank
Offense	41.0%	83
Defense	53.4%	129
Margin	-12.4%	127

Explosiveness[3]		Rank
Offense	5.3	99
Defense	7.4	128
Margin	-2.1	127

Finishing Drives[4]		Rank
Offense	4.1	108
Defense	5.6	129
Margin	-1.5	128

Adjusted TO Margin[5]		Rank
Projected	-7.6	120
Actual	-10	120
Margin	-2.4	89

KEY: **1**-Average starting field position by yard line; **2**-Rate of successful plays (gaining 50% of necessary yards on 1st down, 70% on 2nd down, 100% on 3rd down); **3**-Explosiveness=yards per play; **4**-Points per trip inside 40-yard line; **5**-TO margin accounting for "luck" • Advanced stats provided by Bill Connelly of SB Nation

NUMBERS TO KNOW

7.9

The Oregon State offense's average distance to go on third down rose from a tolerable 6.4 yards (11th in FBS) to a deadly 7.9 in 2018 (119th). Perhaps it's impressive, then, that the Beavers' third down conversion rate fell only from 40 percent (63rd) to 36 (99th).

53.4

Opponents were never uncomfortable. The Beavers allowed a 53.4 percent success rate (percentage of plays that gained at least 50 percent of necessary yardage on first down, 70 percent on second, or 100 percent on third or fourth), easily the worst in the Pac-12 and second worst in FBS. Only UConn was worse.

9

OSU has won just nine times in 48 games over the last four seasons, its worst four-year total since 1990-93 (7–36–1).

The defense suffered from being paper thin up front. Smith has brought in more players to build depth, but the Beavers remain inexperienced on their defensive line beyond ends Jeromy Reichner and Isaac Hodgins (Isaiah's younger brother) and mammoth nose tackle Elu Aydon. This could pose a problem for a run defense that also finished 129th nationally. Junior college transfer Jordan Whittley will also have the chance to make a quick impact in his one year of eligibility.

The linebacking corps will also get a fast infusion of talent in Nebraska transfer (sensing a theme?) Avery Roberts and Oklahoma transfer Addison Gumbs, who each sat out last season. An improved pass rush will be at the top of defensive coordinator Tim Tibesar's wish list, given that his unit finished with only 15 sacks.

The Beavers created just eight turnovers all season (five fumble recoveries and three interceptions), making them the only FBS team with fewer than 10. Getting safety David Morris back from injury to pair on the back line with hard-hitting Jalen Moore, who led the defense with 102 tackles, could help.

SPECIALISTS The Beavers return all of their primary specialists, led by sophomore Champ Flemings. The smallest player on the roster at 5'5" and 140 pounds, Flemings is also one of the most elusive. He showed flashes of potential as the Beavers' lead kick returner, taking three returns for gains of 50 yards or more as a redshirt freshman. Only five other players in the country had that many returns of that length.

Placekicker Jordan Choukair is back for what would be his third full year as a starter, looking to improve after making 24-of-39 field goal attempts (61.5 percent) in the past two seasons.

FINAL ANALYSIS There were encouraging signs of progress during Smith's first season back in Corvallis, despite a roster too young and thin to compete consistently. After adding a slew of transfers, Oregon State will be put right to the test when hosting Oklahoma State in Corvallis on Aug. 30. Pieces are in place for the Beavers to get out of the Pac-12 cellar down the road. But that still may be a year away given the youth and inexperience they have in multiple position groups, even as the team's overall talent is improving.

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (6)

WR	17	**Isaiah Hodgins (Jr.)**	5	Kolby Taylor (So.)
WR	8	**Trevon Bradford (Sr.)**	16	Champ Flemings (So.)
WR	15	Tyjon Lindsey (So.)	13	Jesiah Irish (Fr.)
LT	73	**Blake Brandel (Sr.)**	67	Joshua Gray (Fr.)
LG	63	**Gus Lavaka (Sr.)**	71	Brock Wellsfry (So.)
C	69	Nous Keobounnam (Jr.)	70	Jake Levengood (Fr.)
RG	56	Clay Cordasco (Sr.)	65	Onesimus Clarke (So.)
RT	68	Brandon Kipper (So.)	77	Jaelen Bush (So.)
TE	81	**Noah Togiai (Sr.)**	10	Isaiah Smalls (So.)
QB	6	Jake Luton (Sr.)	3	Tristan Gebbia (So.)
RB	22	**Jermar Jefferson (So.)**	21	Artavis Pierce (Sr.)

DEFENSE (7)

Returning Starters in Bold

DE	91	Jeromy Reichner (Sr.)	96	LaMone Williams (Sr.)
NT	99	Elu Aydon (Sr.)	98	Cody Anderson (So.)
DE	90	**Isaac Hodgins (So.)**	50	Jordan Whittley (Sr.)
OLB	49	**Andrzej Hughes-Murray (Sr.)**	44	Isaiah Tufaga (So.)
MLB	41	**Shemar Smith (Sr.)**	42	Doug Taumoelau (Jr.)
MLB	34	Avery Roberts (So.)	6	Matthew Tago (So.)
OLB	9	**Hamilcar Rashed Jr. (Jr.)**	15	Addison Gumbs (So.)
CB	23	Isaiah Dunn (Jr.)	14	**Kaleb Hayes (So.)**
CB	2	**Shawn Wilson (Sr.)**	10	Omar Hicks-Onu (Sr.)
S	33	**Jalen Moore (Sr.)**	7	Kee Whetzel (Jr.)
S	24	David Morris (So.)	5	Jeffrey Manning Jr. (So.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	46	Jordan Choukair (Sr.)	KR	16	Champ Flemings (So.)
P	39	Daniel Rodriguez (Sr.)	PR	8	Trevon Bradford (Sr.)

2018 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Jake Luton	**224**	**140**	**1,660**	**10**	**4**
Conor Blount	153	95	1,117	7	2
Jack Colletto	**47**	**23**	**201**	**0**	**3**

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD
Jermar Jefferson	**239**	**1,380**	**5.8**	**12**
Artavis Pierce	**54**	**408**	**7.6**	**4**
Trevon Bradford	**12**	**136**	**11.3**	**0**
B.J. Baylor	**24**	**80**	**3.3**	**1**

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Isaiah Hodgins	**59**	**876**	**14.8**	**5**
Timmy Hernandez	58	661	11.4	3
Trevon Bradford	**56**	**649**	**11.6**	**6**

KICKING: **Jordan Choukair, 12-20 FGs, 71 pts.**
TACKLES: **Jalen Moore, 102; Shemar Smith, 85**
SACKS: **Andrzej Hughes-Murray, 3.0**
INTERCEPTIONS: 3 players tied with 1

Returning Players in **Bold**

SCOUTING THE BEAVERS

OPPOSING COACHES SIZE UP OREGON STATE

"The blueprint is still to try and emulate Washington. Right now it's a question of how they're going to get there. They've got those two young running backs who are really good players. They have a QB competition going, and it might be good if they pick a guy early and get him as ready as they can. That's probably the incumbent guy, Jake Luton, but they have to figure out a backup because they'll probably both end up seeing time. … The defense was really bad. You could pretty much do anything you wanted to schematically, and they were thin so they couldn't really get aggressive or physical with you. … Jonathan Smith has a ton of respect around the league. No one's questioning the plan or the scheme, it's just a matter of if they can ever build out enough talent. As an assistant coach, he was a pretty quiet guy who didn't really want the spotlight, and he's putting that personality into the program. He played there, he knows what they can be, but he also has to know how small their margins are. … They need to look at how to be really different with their recruiting. Right now maybe that's junior colleges to get the defense shored up, or you go out of the region more than you have been. Everyone wants to judge them relative to Mike Riley, but he had them consistent when the division was a very different place."

Stanford **Cardinal**

National Forecast: **34** • Pac-12 North Prediction: **4** • Projected Record: **7-5, 5-4 Pac-12**

K.J. Costello

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: David Shaw
Record at School: 82-26 (8 years)
Career Record: 82-26 (8 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Tavita Pritchard
Defensive Coordinator: Lance Anderson
Location: Stanford, CA
Stadium: Stanford Stadium (50,424)

KEY CARDINAL

K.J. COSTELLO, QB Second-team all-conference pick in 2018 led the Pac-12 in passer rating. Should be one of the nation's top QBs in '19.

PAULSON ADEBO, CB First-team All-Pac-12 selection last season, when he broke up 20 passes.

WALKER LITTLE, OT First-team All-Pac-12 in 2018 anchors the Cardinal's line from the left side with his enormous 6'7", 313-pound frame.

KEY LOSSES

JJ ARCEGA-WHITESIDE, WR Second-team All-Pac-12 performer led the conference in touchdown catches with 14. Left school with one season of eligibility remaining.

BOBBY OKEREKE, ILB Stanford's leading tackler last season with 96; also had 3.5 sacks and broke up five passes.

SEAN BARTON, ILB Team's second-leading tackler in 2018 with 92; leaves a big void at inside backer.

RISING STAR

The highest-rated incoming freshman, **ELIJAH HIGGINS** has a chance to get playing time early. Wide receiver is a position at which a freshman can make an impact, and the 6'3", 215-pound Higgins could be the kind of big receiver that JJ Arcega-Whiteside was last season when he had 14 TD receptions.

Stanford is undergoing an identity crisis. The Cardinal used a throwback physical style to win three conference titles (2012, '13, '15) in the first six seasons after the conference expanded to 12 schools. It overwhelmed opponents with a big offensive line, strong running game and aggressive defense to control tempo and the clock as it wore down foes. Suddenly last season, Stanford's power running game disappeared, and so did its invincibility. The Cardinal wound up in third place in the Pac-12 North in 2018, and for just the second time since 2009, Stanford finished the season unranked.

Stanford could not run the ball effectively for the first time in David Shaw's tenure — it finished 11th in the conference in rushing offense. At midseason, the Cardinal made a dramatic change, switching to an offense that relied on the passing of quarterback K.J. Costello. It paid off with four wins to end the season. Still, the 9–4 overall record and a 6–3 conference mark in 2018 are no longer reasons for pride at Stanford.

OFFENSE Shaw has a tricky mission: Restore the Cardinal's ability to run the ball and control the clock while still allowing Costello to win games. Costello paced the Pac-12 in passing efficiency and led the Cardinal to four straight wins to end the season when Shaw essentially gave up on the run game. With Bryce Love now gone following an injury-plagued season, will Shaw discard the ball-control game?

"I would love for our persona to be physical and efficient," Shaw says. "My goal has always been to be balanced. We want to play to our strength."

Costello is the team's strength, and Stanford should have adequate wide receivers in Osiris St. Brown, Connor Wedington and Michael Wilson despite the departures of JJ Arcega-Whiteside and Trenton Irwin. A prime target will be tight end Colby Parkinson, an NFL-caliber player who had seven touchdown receptions in 2018 despite being the No. 2 tight end behind Kaden Smith.

With Love gone after rushing for just 739 yards in 2018, the Cardinal probably will go with Cameron Scarlett as their No. 1 tailback after he rushed for 330 yards last season. Though not as fast or as elusive as Love, Scarlett is a more consistent between-the-tackles runner.

The issue is the offensive line, which did well in pass blocking in 2018 but did an unexpectedly poor job of run blocking during an injury-plagued season. Four of the five presumed offensive line starters for 2019 started at least three games in 2018, with tackle Walker Little being the standout. Much of the onus is on offensive line coach Kevin Carberry, who enters his second season with Stanford after mixed results in his first campaign.

DEFENSE When Stanford was a dominant force in the Pac-12, it had a punishing defense. The Cardinal's 2013 conference championship team ranked third in the nation against the run, first in sacks and 16th in total defense. Last season, Stanford slipped to 45th against the run, 23rd in sacks and 78th in total defense.

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	Northwestern
Sept.	7	at USC
Sept.	14	at UCF
Sept.	21	Oregon
Sept.	28	at Oregon State
Oct.	5	Washington
Oct.	17	UCLA
Oct.	26	Arizona
Nov.	9	at Colorado
Nov.	16	at Washington State
Nov.	23	California
Nov.	30	Notre Dame

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 9-4, 6-3 PAC-12

Aug.	31	San Diego State	W	31-10
Sept.	8	USC	W	17-3
Sept.	15	UC Davis	W	30-10
Sept.	22	at Oregon	(ot) W	38-31
Sept.	29	at Notre Dame	L	17-38
Oct.	6	Utah	L	21-40
Oct.	18	at Arizona State	W	20-13
Oct.	27	Washington State	L	38-41
Nov.	3	at Washington	L	23-27
Nov.	10	Oregon State	W	48-17
Nov.	24	at UCLA	W	49-42
Dec.	1	at California	W	23-13
Dec.	31	vs. Pittsburgh #	W	14-13

#Sun Bowl

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	PAC-12	NATIONAL
Scoring	28.4 ppg	5	73
Rushing	107.9 ypg	11	123
Passing	273.1 ypg	2	25
Total	381.0 ypg	11	85
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**PAC-12**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	22.9 ppg	4	37
Rushing	146.1 ypg	7	45
Passing	264.0 ypg	11	115
Total	410.1 ypg	9	78
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**PAC-12**	**NATIONAL**
+3	+0.23	4	46

2019 RECRUITS

1. Elijah Higgins, WR, Kyle, TX
2. Austin Jones, RB, Antioch, CA
3. Branson Bragg, C, Combine, TX
4. Stephen Herron, LB, New Albany, IN
5. Joshua Pakola, LB, Newark, CA
6. Salim Turner-Muhammad, CB, Corona, NY
7. Tristan Sinclair, LB, Alamo, CA
8. Colby Bowman, WR, Bellflower, CA
9. Bradley Archer, TE, Livermore, CA
10. Walter Rouse, OT, Silver Spring, MD
11. Aeneas DiCosmo, DE, Montclair, NJ
12. Barrett Miller, OT, Aurora, CO
13. Jonathan McGill, S, Coppell, TX
14. Nathaniel Peat, RB, Columbia, MO
15. Levani Damuni, LB, Providence, UT
16. Jake Hornibrook, OG, West Chester, PA
17. Kyu Blu Kelly, CB, Las Vegas, NV
18. Nicolas Toomer, CB, Tyrone, GA
19. Zahran Manley, CB, Claremont, CA
20. Drake Nugent, C, Lone Tree, CO
21. Ryan Sanborn, P, San Diego, CA
22. Brock Jones, S, Clovis, CA
23. Marcus Graham, WR, Charlotte, NC
24. Wakely Lush, TE, San Clemente, CA
25. Diego Preciado, WR, Escondido, CA

Recruits ranked according to the 247SportsComposite

Peter Brouillet

ADVANCED STATS

5 Factors: College Football's Most Important Stats

Field Position[1]		Rank
Offense	31.3	33
Defense	26.7	9
Margin	+4.6	16

Efficiency[2]		Rank
Offense	43.4%	48
Defense	42.7%	82
Margin	+0.7%	69

Explosiveness[3]		Rank
Offense	6.1	34
Defense	5.7	65
Margin	+0.4	50

Finishing Drives[4]		Rank
Offense	4.7	62
Defense	3.7	13
Margin	+1.0	17

Adjusted TO Margin[5]		Rank
Projected	0.9	62
Actual	3	46
Margin	+2.1	47

KEY: 1-Average starting field position by yard line; **2**-Rate of successful plays (gaining 50% of necessary yards on 1st down, 70% on 2nd down, 100% on 3rd down); **3**-Explosiveness=yards per play; **4**-Points per trip inside 40-yard line; **5**-TO margin accounting for "luck" • Advanced stats provided by Bill Connelly of SB Nation

NUMBERS TO KNOW

24.3

There were far more rushing glitches than expected in 2018. The Cardinal's stuff rate (non-sack rushes stopped at or behind the line) was 24.3 percent, 124th in FBS. For Bryce Love, it was even worse: 27.1 percent.

-1.2

To win third downs, you usually have to create good ones first. In part because of negative plays, Stanford did not. The Cardinal averaged 7.9 yards to go on third downs (117th in FBS), and the defense averaged 6.7 (101st). The minus-1.2-yard margin ranked 122nd overall.

+4.6

Despite negative plays and inefficiency, Stanford's special teams still created field position advantages. The Cardinal's field position margin of plus-4.6 yards per drive was best in the Pac-12 and 16th in FBS.

The loss of its top two tacklers will make it difficult for Stanford to regain its physical defensive presence. Inside linebackers Bobby Okereke and Sean Barton accounted for 96 and 92 tackles, respectively, last season, and no one else on the team had more than 64. Neither will be back, and Barton's decision to retire from football with a season of eligibility remaining was a major blow. Ricky Miezan played in just four games as a freshman last season, but an impressive spring is likely to land him one of the inside linebacker spots. The other inside linebacker position remains open.

The front three in Stanford's 3-4 alignment should be adequate, with defensive end Jovan Swann (4.5 sacks in 2018) a potential big-play contributor. Jordan Fox will hold down an outside linebacker spot after collecting 4.5 sacks and 9.5 tackles for a loss last season, but Stanford is still looking for a standout pass rusher.

The star of the defense is Paulson Adebo, a first-team All-Pac-12 cornerback as a redshirt freshman who had four interceptions and a conference-leading 20 passes broken up. Opposing offenses will attack the other side, which might be manned by Obi Eboh, although freshman Salim Turner-Muhammad may be asked to step in. Safety is another position of concern after free safety Frank Buncom opted to end his career rather than return for a fifth season.

SPECIALISTS Placekicking will be a strength with the return of Jet Toner, who made 14-of-15 field goal attempts last season, but the departure of punter Jake Bailey, a second-team all-conference pick each of the past two seasons, is a blow. Wilson and Scarlett should give the Cardinal adequate — but not outstanding — results as a punt returner and kickoff returner, respectively.

FINAL ANALYSIS The Cardinal's challenging early-season schedule could knock the spirit out of the team, as its first four games are against Northwestern (home), USC (road), UCF (road), and Oregon (home).

With Costello throwing the ball, the Cardinal should score points, but the concerns at inside linebacker will make it difficult to control opposing offenses. Shaw won't let the Cardinal sink lower than fourth in the Pac-12 North, but a division title is a long shot.

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (3)

WR	4	Michael Wilson (So.)	9	Osiris St. Brown (So.)
WR	5	Connor Wedington (So.)	13	Simi Fehoko (Fr.)
LT	79	Foster Sarell (So.)	76	Grant Pease (Fr.)
LG	74	Devery Hamilton (Jr.)	50	Trey Stratford (Fr.)
C	51	Drew Dalman (So.)		Branson Bragg (Fr.)
RG	55	Dylan Powell (Jr.)	50	Trey Stratford (Fr.)
RT	**72**	**Walker Little (Jr.)**	78	Henry Hattis (Jr.)
TE	**84**	**Colby Parkinson (Jr.)**	80	Scooter Harrington (Jr.)
QB	**3**	**K.J. Costello (Jr.)**	15	Davis Mills (So.)
RB	22	Cameron Scarlett (Sr.)	23	Trevor Speights (Jr.)
FB	34	Houston Heimuli (So.)	24	Jay Symonds (Fr.)

DEFENSE (5)

Returning Starters in Bold

DE	**51**	**Jovan Swann (Jr.)**	91	Thomas Schaffer (Jr.)
DT	**57**	**Michael Williams (Jr.)**	24	Dalyn Wade-Perry (So.)
DE	34	Thomas Booker (So.)	23	Ryan Johnson (So.)
OLB	10	Jordan Fox (Jr.)	90	Gabe Reid (So.)
ILB	45	Ricky Miezan (Fr.)	21	Curtis Robinson (Jr.)
ILB	14	Jacob Mangum-Farrar (Fr.)	25	Andrew Pryts (Jr.)
OLB	52	Casey Toohill (Sr.)	**6**	**Andres Fox (So.)**
CB	**11**	**Paulson Adebo (So.)**	29	Kendall Williamson (So.)
CB	22	Obi Eboh (Jr.)	8	Treyjohn Butler (Jr.)
FS	**3**	**Malik Antoine (Jr.)**	18	Stuart Head (So.)
SS	19	Noah Williams (So.)	18	Stuart Head (So.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	26	Jet Toner (Jr.)	KR	22	Cameron Scarlett (Sr.)
P	33	Alex Gracey (Fr.)	PR	4	Michael Wilson (So.)

2018 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
K.J. Costello	**413**	**269**	**3,540**	**29**	**11**

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD
Bryce Love	166	739	4.5	6
Cameron Scarlett	**79**	**330**	**4.2**	**8**
Trevor Speights	**59**	**221**	**3.7**	**1**
Dorian Maddox	**23**	**103**	**4.5**	**1**
Justus Woods	**4**	**15**	**3.8**	**0**

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
JJ Arcega-Whiteside	63	1,059	16.8	14
Trenton Irwin	60	685	11.4	2
Kaden Smith	47	635	13.5	2
Colby Parkinson	**29**	**485**	**16.7**	**7**

KICKING: **Jet Toner, 14-15 FGs, 76 pts.**

TACKLES: Bobby Okereke, 96; Sean Barton, 92

SACKS: **Gabe Reid, 5.5**

INTERCEPTIONS: **Paulson Adebo, 4**

Returning Players in **Bold**

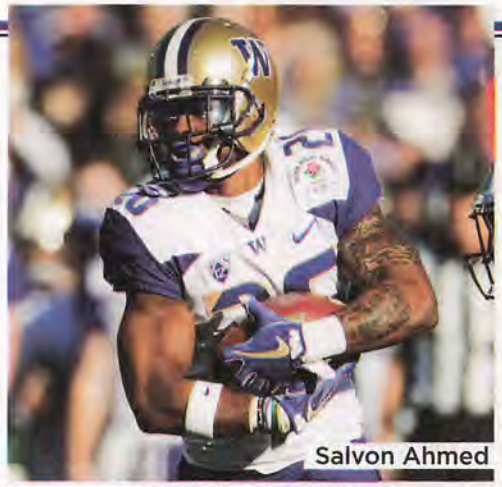
SCOUTING THE CARDINAL

OPPOSING COACHES SIZE UP STANFORD

"Bryce Love's injuries seemed to really take their momentum last year. But what's been missing for Stanford is that they haven't had that exceptional quarterback who can force you into respecting downfield passing enough to let their running backs breathe a little bit. You can define almost everything about the program as pre- and post-Andrew Luck, although I think they'd take a Kevin Hogan-level performance from K.J. Costello this season. … They have a really good Stanford-level tight end in Colby Parkinson. They'll use him to shore up losing their top receiver (JJ Arcega-Whiteside). … Defensively, they're replacing a lot of their linebackers, but they're so solid and effective there that you expect them to have guys ready to go. They're just consistent developing that position. … They could actually stand to change things up a little bit more on offense. They have a really solid group of receivers, and they've been recruiting that position better and better in (David) Shaw's time. They're never going to move away from the power necessarily, but they didn't run the ball at all like they have in the past. … Overall they're still extremely consistent and they have a fantastic culture. Shaw is completely at home, they have a very sharp group of assistants who know how to recruit and develop their guys."

Washington **Huskies**

National Forecast: **12** • Pac-12 North Prediction: **1** • Projected Record: **11-2, 7-2 Pac-12**


Salvon Ahmed

Washington faces its biggest rebuild in six seasons with Chris Petersen as coach — the Huskies are replacing 13 starters, including nine on defense — yet the new quarterback has team followers more hopeful than wary about what comes next. Georgia transfer Jacob Eason brings a pro-style arm, a local pedigree (he grew up 35 miles from campus) and the ability to unify a UW fan base that grew divided over his quarterback predecessor. Jake Browning drew praise for starting four seasons and claiming two Pac-12 championships, but heavy criticism for losing nearly every big game on a national stage.

Eason took only a handful of snaps over the past two seasons because of an injury at Georgia in 2017 and his transfer in 2018, but he regularly tested the top UW defense in practice and impressed with his arm. He should be an upgrade over Browning.

OFFENSE The strength of the Huskies is their huge and experienced offensive line, which will help take the pressure off Eason. Four starters return in All-Pac-12 center Nick Harris, a stout 6'1", 302-pound senior entering his fourth season in the opening lineup; Luke Wattenberg, a dependable 6'5", 307-pound junior left guard and a two-year starter; Jaxson Kirkland, an overly physical 6'7", 320-pound sophomore right guard; and Jared Hilbers, a 6'7", 305-pound senior now at right tackle after starting 11 games at left tackle. The "newcomer" is senior Trey Adams, a mobile 6'8", 306-pound left tackle, an All-Pac-12 player as a sophomore and a 32-game starter who missed most of 2018 with a back injury. The Huskies will run behind him as much as possible. They might run a lot.

The UW will experience a drop-off at running back after losing Myles Gaskin, a four-year starter and the school's all-time leading rusher. Junior Salvon Ahmed, Gaskin's understudy, has better open-field speed but not nearly the creativity or patience in picking out running lanes.

Goals for the receivers are two-fold: keep tight end honors candidate Hunter Bryant on the field for a full season and find a No. 1 wide receiver. Bryant missed 15 games with knee injuries in his first two seasons; when healthy, he's the Huskies' top pass catcher. In the team's two-tight end lineup, he pairs up with sophomore Cade Otton, a 10-game starter and a superb blocker. Senior Aaron Fuller and junior Ty Jones, who caught 58 and 31 passes, respectively, for a combined 10 touchdowns, return as the starting wide receivers, as does senior reserve Andre Baccellia, who added 55 receptions but didn't score. The downside is that none is a legitimate deep threat.

Eason brings A-list dimensions (6'6", 228 pounds) and credentials at quarterback, starting as a true freshman for Georgia and beating out Jake Fromm as a sophomore before a knee injury sidelined him. He's expected to enliven a UW offense that became stagnant.

DEFENSE On this side of the ball, the Huskies return only senior defensive end Benning Potoa'e and senior safety Myles Bryant as starters, but all is not bleak, espe-

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Chris Petersen
Record at School: 47-21 (5 years)
Career Record: 139-33 (13 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Bush Hamdan
Defensive Coordinators: Pete Kwiatkowski, Jimmy Lake
Location: Seattle, WA
Stadium: Husky Stadium (70,138)

KEY HUSKIES

NICK HARRIS, C After starting at both guard spots, Harris became a mainstay at center, turning into an All-Pac-12 pick.

TREY ADAMS, OT After two injury-filled seasons, the NFL-bound left tackle and one-time All-Pac-12 pick should dominate play again.

HUNTER BRYANT, TE There's no telling what this hard-luck and elusive hybrid receiver can do if he can avoid more knee problems.

KEY LOSSES

TAYLOR RAPP, FS Three spectacular seasons from this secondary sensation rightfully provided him with early entry to the NFL Draft.

MYLES GASKIN, RB Became the UW's all-time leading rusher and never once disappointed with the ball in his hands.

BYRON MURPHY, CB The league's best lockdown corner played just two seasons before trying his luck with the NFL.

RISING STAR

Outside linebacker **JOE TRYON** got his chance late in his redshirt freshman season, drawing two spot starts. He came off the bench to collect two tackles for a loss against Washington State. His hulking 6'5", 266-pound frame makes him tough to block.

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	Eastern Washington
Sept.	7	California
Sept.	14	Hawaii
Sept.	21	at BYU
Sept.	28	USC
Oct.	5	at Stanford
Oct.	12	at Arizona
Oct.	19	Oregon
Nov.	2	Utah
Nov.	8	at Oregon State
Nov.	23	at Colorado
Nov.	29	Washington State

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 10-4, 7-2 PAC-12

Sept.	1	vs. Auburn #		L	16-21
Sept.	8	North Dakota		W	45-3
Sept.	15	at Utah		W	21-7
Sept.	22	Arizona State		W	27-20
Sept.	29	BYU		W	35-7
Oct.	6	at UCLA		W	31-24
Oct.	13	at Oregon	(ot)	L	27-30
Oct.	20	Colorado		W	27-13
Oct.	27	at California		L	10-12
Nov.	3	Stanford		W	27-23
Nov.	17	Oregon State		W	42-23
Nov.	23	at Washington State		W	28-15
Nov.	30	vs. Utah %		W	10-3
Jan.	1	vs. Ohio State &		L	23-28

#Atlanta %Santa Clara &Rose Bowl

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	PAC-12	NATIONAL
Scoring	26.4 ppg	8	88
Rushing	176.3 ypg	5	55
Passing	238.4 ypg	8	61
Total	414.6 ypg	5	55
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**PAC-12**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	16.4 ppg	1	5
Rushing	116.1 ypg	2	15
Passing	190.1 ypg	2	25
Total	306.2 ypg	1	12
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**PAC-12**	**NATIONAL**
+3	+0.21	5	50

2019 RECRUITS

1. Faatui Tuitele, DT, Honolulu, HI
2. Jacob Bandes, DT, Antioch, CA
3. Trent McDuffie, CB, Westminster, CA
4. Laiatu Latu, LB, Sacramento, CA
5. Puka Nacua, WR, Provo, UT
6. Dylan Morris, QB, Puyallup, WA
7. Daniel Heimuli, LB, East Palo Alto, CA
8. Josh Calvert, LB, Oak Park, CA
9. Cameron Davis, RB, Rancho Cucamonga, CA
10. Asa Turner, S, Carlsbad, CA
11. Julius Buelow, OT, Kapolei, HI
12. Nate Kalepo, OT, Renton, WA
13. Sama Paama, DT, Waipahu, HI
14. Troy Fautanu, OG, Henderson, NV
15. Kamren Fabiculanan, CB, Camarillo, CA
16. Cameron Williams, S, Bakersfield, CA
17. Bralen Trice, LB, Glendale, AZ
18. Taj Davis, WR, Chino, CA
19. Corey Luciano, OT, Danville, CA*
20. Noa Ngalu, DT, East Palo Alto, CA
21. Miki Ah You, LB, Laie, HI
22. Alphonzo Tuputala, ILB, Federal Way, WA
23. Tim Horn, K, Honolulu, HI

*junior college transfer

Recruits ranked according to the 247SportsComposite

Peter Brouillet

ADVANCED STATS

5 Factors: College Football's Most Important Stats

Field Position[1]		Rank
Offense	30.0	64
Defense	30.2	88
Margin	**-0.2**	**79**

Efficiency[2]		Rank
Offense	45.4%	29
Defense	38.3%	31
Margin	**+7.1%**	**21**

Explosiveness[3]		Rank
Offense	6.0	49
Defense	4.7	11
Margin	**+1.3**	**14**

Finishing Drives[4]		Rank
Offense	4.0	116
Defense	3.7	12
Margin	**+0.3**	**54**

Adjusted TO Margin[5]		Rank
Projected	7.6	8
Actual	3	46
Margin	**-4.6**	**112**

KEY: 1-Average starting field position by yard line; **2**-Rate of successful plays (gaining 50% of necessary yards on 1st down, 70% on 2nd down, 100% on 3rd down); **3**-Explosiveness=yards per play; **4**-Points per trip inside 40-yard line; **5**-TO margin accounting for "luck" • Advanced stats provided by Bill Connelly of SB Nation

NUMBERS TO KNOW

1

Washington's rebuilt 2019 defense has a high bar to clear from a big-play perspective: The Huskies allowed just one gain of 40-plus yards all season. One! In 14 games!

-4.6

Based on national averages for fumble recovery rates and the ratio of interceptions to passes broken up, UW's turnover margin should have been about plus-7.6. Instead, it was only plus-3. That 4.6-turnover difference was the unluckiest in the Pac-12. Turnovers were particularly costly in losses to Auburn and Cal, games in which they had a combined minus-4 margin.

0.780

Washington has achieved cruising altitude under Chris Petersen. The Huskies' win percentage over the last three seasons is 0.780, their highest three-year average since 1990-92 (0.861).

cially up front. They've accumulated an impressive collection of touted young linemen, led by redshirt freshman nose tackle Tuli Letuligasenoa, whose low-leverage frame should make him a disruptive force up front. He'll be flanked by junior defensive tackle Levi Onwuzurike, a five-game starter capable of bringing heavy pressure, and Potoa'e, who possesses rare game experience but disappointed with just one sack last season.

The most pressing concern is at inside linebacker. Replacements are needed at both spots, and the leading candidates haven't been able to stay healthy. Senior Brandon Wellington started only the Pac-12 title game and the Rose Bowl and senior DJ Beavers just the opener in 2018 because of injuries. The Huskies don't know if they can count on either guy. Speedy sophomore Ariel Ngata moved from the outside to provide another option, while redshirt freshman Jackson Sirmon and freshman Josh Calvert might have to play a lot as untested players.

Washington's five-player secondary took a hit with four starters graduating or heading early to the NFL. Only Bryant, a nickel back and a 25-game starter, returns, but he's moved to safety, joining junior Brandon McKinney. Yet the Huskies have been hoarding and seasoning a glut of defensive back talent. Juniors Keith Taylor and Elijah Molden and redshirt freshman Kyler Gordon are the new cornerbacks. Gordon, with lockdown coverage skills, projects as the UW's next elite defensive back.

SPECIALISTS After then-redshirt freshman kicker Peyton Henry missed a potential game-winning field goal against bitter rival Oregon, change was inevitable. The Huskies will hand the job to Tim Horn, a true freshman from Hawaii. Senior punter Joel Whitford, a two-year starter from Australia, has been reliable, using his rugby-style kicks to win the field position battle.

FINAL ANALYSIS Eason could give the Huskies a free-wheeling offense that takes pressure off their revamped defense and gives them a chance to add to their string of three consecutive double-digit-win seasons. However, game-changing performers are badly needed at inside linebacker and wide receiver, or there might be a fall-off for this team. A new quarterback can't do it all alone.

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (7)

WR	**2**	**Aaron Fuller (Sr.)**	5	Andre Baccellia (Sr.)
WR	**20**	**Ty Jones (Jr.)**	6	Chico McClatcher (Sr.)
LT	72	Trey Adams (Sr.)	78	Matteo Mele (Fr.)
LG	**76**	**Luke Wattenberg (Jr.)**	68	M.J. Ale (Fr.)
C	**56**	**Nick Harris (Sr.)**	63	Cole Norgaard (So.)
RG	**51**	**Jaxson Kirkland (So.)**	59	Henry Roberts (Sr.)
RT	**70**	**Jared Hilbers (Sr.)**	66	Henry Bainivalu (So.)
TE	1	Hunter Bryant (Jr.)	86	Jacob Kizer (Jr.)
TE	**87**	**Cade Otton (So.)**	37	Jack Westover (Fr.)
QB	10	Jacob Eason (Jr.)	13	Jake Haener (So.)
RB	26	Salvon Ahmed (Jr.)	25	Sean McGrew (Jr.)

DEFENSE (2)

Returning Starters in Bold

DE	**8**	**Benning Potoa'e (Sr.)**	55	Ryan Bowman (Jr.)
NT	91	Tuli Letuligasenoa (Fr.)	94	Sam Taimani (Fr.)
DT	95	Levi Onwuzurike (Jr.)	90	Josiah Bronson (Sr.)
ILB	52	Ariel Ngata (So.)	30	Kyler Manu (Sr.)
ILB	13	Brandon Wellington (Sr.)	43	Jackson Sirmon (Fr.)
OLB	9	Joe Tryon (So.)	55	Ryan Bowman (Jr.)
CB	27	Keith Taylor (Jr.)	21	Dom Hampton (Fr.)
CB	3	Elijah Molden (Jr.)		Trent McDuffie (Fr.)
CB	19	Kyler Gordon (Fr.)	29	Julius Irvin (Fr.)
SS	23	Brandon McKinney (Jr.)	16	Cameron Williams (Fr.)
FS	**5**	**Myles Bryant (Sr.)**	18	Isaiah Gilchrist (Jr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K		Tim Horn (Fr.)	**KR**	25	Sean McGrew (Jr.)
P	32	Joel Whitford (Sr.)	**PR**	2	Aaron Fuller (Sr.)

2018 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Jake Browning	388	252	3,192	16	10
Jake Haener	**13**	**9**	**107**	**1**	**1**

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD
Myles Gaskin	259	1,268	4.9	12
Salvon Ahmed	**104**	**608**	**5.8**	**7**
Sean McGrew	**50**	**226**	**4.5**	**1**
Kamari Pleasant	**42**	**214**	**5.1**	**2**

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Aaron Fuller	**58**	**874**	**15.1**	**4**
Andre Baccellia	**55**	**584**	**10.6**	**0**
Ty Jones	**31**	**491**	**15.8**	**6**
Drew Sample	25	252	10.1	3

KICKING: Peyton Henry, 16-22 FGs, 91 pts.

TACKLES: Ben Burr-Kirven, 176; Tevis Barlett, 73

SACKS: Taylor Rapp, 5.0

INTERCEPTIONS: Byron Murphy, 4

Returning Players in **Bold**

SCOUTING THE HUSKIES

OPPOSING COACHES SIZE UP WASHINGTON

"You've really seen the past few years that the coaching staff is their biggest strength. They certainly have great players on the field, but you've seen them have three or four first-round picks on defense and then the defense the next year was even better. They develop guys in a really amazing way. They will be tough no matter what because of Chris Petersen's culture. … They really know how to run the football. They're a creative rushing team. Losing your running back and quarterback means you're going to lean on your fundamentals, your culture and your physicality, so they might not be as creative as we've seen. … Jacob Eason is certainly the next guy, we assume as much, because obviously he's a really talented, proven guy. They could do some really dynamic stuff with him. … I think the best way to describe what they do is extremely sound. That's boring, but it just seems like when you break down their tape, they do what they're always going to be good at, and they do so much. If they run power on you, they're going to execute it really well. Then the next week you see them all spread out and it looks like they've been doing it all year. They have the ability to look comfortable and experienced doing all different kinds of things on offense."

Washington State **Cougars**

National Forecast: **27** • Pac-12 North Prediction: **3** • Projected Record: **8-4, 5-4 Pac-12**

Max Borghi

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Mike Leach
Record at School: 49-40 (7 years)
Career Record: 133-83 (17 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Mike Leach
Defensive Coordinator: Tracy Claeys
Location: Pullman, WA
Stadium: Martin Stadium (32,952)

KEY COUGARS

MAX BORGHI, RB Multi-purpose tailback will take on a bigger role this season after rushing for eight TDs and catching four as a rookie.

DEZMON PATMON, WR A tough cover at 6'4", 225; caught 61 passes for team-high 816 yards and scored five touchdowns.

JALEN THOMPSON, S Quick, physical senior hasn't missed a start for Cougars in three seasons. Could emerge as Pac-12's top safety in 2019.

KEY LOSSES

GARDNER MINSHEW, QB His lone season at WSU was the most productive in Pac-12 history. Finished fifth in Heisman voting.

ANDRE DILLARD, LT A three-year starter at left tackle and an All-American in 2018.

PEYTON PELLUER, LB Sixth-year senior played the most games in program history (54) and finished with 352 career tackles — fifth most all time.

RISING STAR

The Cougars signed a group of junior college players to fill out their secondary. **BRYCE BEEKMAN**, a transfer from Arizona Western who was the country's fourth-ranked junior college safety according to ESPN, worked with the first team in the spring and could start in the fall.

A program merely seeking relevance in the first years of the Mike Leach era has now established itself as a year-in, year-out contender in the Pac-12 North, and even as Washington State tries to replace the most popular quarterback to come through Pullman in two decades, the Cougars still believe they should be competing for a league title in 2019. Rightly so.

Over the last four years, Washington State has compiled a record of 26–10 in Pac-12 games — not to mention an overall mark of 37–15 — as Leach's Air Raid offense continues to register astronomical passing numbers. The positive momentum is manifested in the win streaks the Cougars have compiled against various North rivals: three straight against Stanford, four in a row against Oregon and five consecutive against Oregon State.

But the Cougars know that they may not capture a division title until another run comes to an end. They have lost their last six games to cross-state rival Washington — many of those deciding the division title — and a 13-point loss to the Huskies in the 2018 Apple Cup was one of the only blemishes on an otherwise superb season.

OFFENSE Gardner Minshew's one-year loan went better than anyone could have anticipated, as the transfer quarterback broke the Pac-12's single-season passing record, finished fifth in Heisman Trophy voting and became a cult hero. The graduate transfer route worked so well the first time that the Cougars took another dip and emerged with Gage Gubrud, a former FCS All-American who accumulated more than 11,000 yards of offense and 100 total touchdowns at Eastern Washington — and, ironically, defeated WSU in his first career start.

To win the job, Gubrud has to overcome an ankle injury and beat out two eager seniors — Anthony Gordon and Trey Tinsley — who've spent significantly more time with Leach's playbook.

The Cougars return seven of the receivers who figure into Leach's eight-man rotation. Collectively, they caught 297 passes and had 30 touchdowns in 2018. Outside targets Davontavean Martin and Dezmon Patmon led the group in catches, with 69 and 61, respectively, and both still have lots of untapped potential. Slot receiver Renard Bell had just 20 receptions, but he turned five of those into TDs.

James Williams fled to the NFL a year early, so sophomore Max Borghi should see a major uptick in playing time as the team's primary running back. That's not awful news for Cougar fans. A rugged runner with terrific hands, Borghi accounted for 12 touchdowns as a true freshman and averaged more than five yards per carry.

The offensive line was outstanding in protection last season, giving up just one sack every 52 pass attempts. WSU loses one of the country's most reliable tackles in Andre Dillard, but four other starters return.

DEFENSE They changed coordinators, but the Cougars retained many of the principles and philosophies that have been key to their defensive renaissance. The result?

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	New Mexico State
Sept.	7	Northern Colorado
Sept.	13	at Houston #
Sept.	21	UCLA
Sept.	28	at Utah
Oct.	12	at Arizona State
Oct.	19	Colorado
Oct.	26	at Oregon
Nov.	9	at California
Nov.	16	Stanford
Nov.	23	Oregon State
Nov.	29	at Washington

#NRG Stadium

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 11-2, 7-2 PAC-12

Sept.	1	at Wyoming	W	41-19
Sept.	8	San Jose State	W	31-0
Sept.	15	Eastern Washington	W	59-24
Sept.	21	at USC	L	36-39
Sept.	29	Utah	W	28-24
Oct.	6	at Oregon State	W	56-37
Oct.	20	Oregon	W	34-20
Oct.	27	at Stanford	W	41-38
Nov.	3	California	W	19-13
Nov.	10	at Colorado	W	31-7
Nov.	17	Arizona	W	69-28
Nov.	23	Washington	L	15-28
Dec.	28	vs. Iowa State #	W	28-26

#Alamo Bowl

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	PAC-12	NATIONAL
Scoring	37.5 ppg	1	15
Rushing	77.7 ypg	12	129
Passing	373.8 ypg	1	1
Total	451.5 ypg	2	27
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**PAC-12**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	23.3 ppg	5	42
Rushing	141.5 ypg	3	38
Passing	218.1 ypg	4	56
Total	359.5 ypg	4	42
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**PAC-12**	**NATIONAL**
+8	+0.62	2	20

2019 RECRUITS

1. Travion Brown, LB, Temecula, CA
2. Jamir Thomas, RB, Massillon, OH
3. Gunner Cruz, QB, Gilbert, AZ
4. Bryce Beekman, S, Baton Rouge, LA*
5. Jouvensly Bazil, RB, Naples, FL
6. Patrick Utschinski, OT, Walla Walla, WA
7. Konner Gomness, OG, Fresno, CA
8. Donovan Ollie, WR, Wylie, TX
9. Billy Pospisil, WR, Arvada, CO
10. Armauni Archie, CB, Vallejo, CA
11. Tyler Garay-Harris, DE, Oakland, CA
12. Peni Naulu, OLB, Waipahu, HI
13. Cosmas Kwete, DL, Phoenix, AZ
14. Jimmy Price, OT, Houston, TX*
15. Daniel Isom, CB, Saint Louis, MO*
16. Derrick Langford, CB, Richmond, CA*
17. Rocky Katoanga, LB, Oceanside, CA
18. Shahman Moore, CB, El Segundo, CA*
19. Ma'ake Fafita, OL, Snohomish, WA
20. Nicholas Sheetz, DE, Greenwood, SC
21. Gatlin Grisso, DB, Aubrey, TX
22. Simon Samarzich, LS, Upland, CA

*junior college transfer

Recruits ranked according to the 247SportsComposite

Tim Clark

ADVANCED STATS

5 Factors: College Football's Most Important Stats

Field Position[1]		Rank
Offense	30.0	60
Defense	27.9	27
Margin	+2.1	45

Efficiency[2]		Rank
Offense	47.9%	13
Defense	41.3%	67
Margin	+6.6%	25

Explosiveness[3]		Rank
Offense	6.1	35
Defense	5.6	59
Margin	+0.5	43

Finishing Drives[4]		Rank
Offense	5.4	6
Defense	4.4	51
Margin	+1.0	16

Adjusted TO Margin[5]		Rank
Projected	4.6	35
Actual	8	20
Margin	+3.4	32

KEY: **1**-Average starting field position by yard line; **2**-Rate of successful plays (gaining 50% of necessary yards on 1st down, 70% on 2nd down, 100% on 3rd down); **3**-Explosiveness=yards per play; **4**-Points per trip inside 40-yard line; **5**-TO margin accounting for "luck" • Advanced stats provided by Bill Connelly of SB Nation

NUMBERS TO KNOW

14

On passing downs (second-and-8 or more, third- or fourth-and-5 or more), Washington State defenders sacked opposing quarterbacks on 14 percent of pass attempts, first in FBS.

47.9

The 2018 Wazzu offense might have been Mike Leach's most efficient in Pullman: the Cougars' 47.9 percent success rate (percentage of plays that gained at least 50 percent of necessary yardage on first down, 70 percent on second, or 100 percent on third or fourth) was 13th in FBS and first in the Pac-12.

37

Wazzu has won 37 games in the last four seasons, a remarkable achievement by any definition but made even more impressive by the fact that the Cougars had won just 36 in the 10 seasons before that recent span.

For the fourth straight season, WSU trimmed the opponent's scoring average and improved in almost every other major category.

The most intriguing newcomer on either side could be nose tackle Lamonte McDougle, who's coming off a redshirt after transferring from West Virginia. McDougle's dad, Stockar, played offensive line for Leach at Oklahoma in the 1990s.

Peyton Pelluer, an accomplished linebacker and leader, is gone after six years, but the Cougars bring back three redshirt juniors in Jahad Woods, Dillon Sherman and Justus Rogers. Those three have played lots of football, but one will have to take on Pelluer's vocal responsibilities. "I've got to step up and be that leader," Woods says.

The defensive backfield returns three players who started last year, but the Cougars did some mixing and matching in the spring to ensure that the best five will be on the field in the fall. That resulted in a position move for Skyler Thomas, who's switching from free safety to nickel, where his dependable tackling could be put to better use. Jalen Thompson's name is well known around the Pac-12 by now, and the strong safety returns after nabbing all-conference honors in 2018.

SPECIALISTS The field goal unit could use some fine-tuning after having two kicks blocked in 2018, but the Cougars are in good shape otherwise. Kicker Blake Mazza returns after booting the game winner against Stanford last season, as does strong-legged punter Oscar Draguicevich (45.7-yard average). Travell Harris brought back one kickoff for a TD in 2018, and the sophomore needs just one more for the school record.

FINAL ANALYSIS The Air Raid is as good as its quarterback. If that wasn't apparent already, Minshew's magical 2018 season reaffirmed it. But the Cougars can probably afford to regress some behind center, if only because they return seven starters on offense. The defense could realistically get better — again — in its second year with coordinator Tracy Claeys.

Reaching the postseason for the sixth time in seven years shouldn't be an issue, but now there are heightened expectations for the 2018 Alamo Bowl champs. The only way to satisfy them may be to claim the Pac-12 North and snap a long, painful drought against Washington.

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (7)

WR	1	**Davontavean Martin (Jr.)**	85	Calvin Jackson Jr. (Sr.)
WR	81	Renard Bell (Jr.)	**5**	**Travell Harris (So.)**
WR	6	Jamire Calvin (Jr.)	19	Brandon Arconado (Sr.)
WR	12	**Dezmon Patmon (Sr.)**	8	Easop Winston Jr. (Sr.)
LT	63	**Liam Ryan (Jr.)**	75	Cade Beresford (Fr.)
LG	65	**Josh Watson (Jr.)**	70	Christian Haangana (Jr.)
C	69	**Frederick Mauigoa (Sr.)**	59	Brian Greene (So.)
RG	74	Robert Valencia (Sr.)	66	Jarrett Kingston (Fr.)
RT	72	**Abraham Lucas (So.)**	61	Hunter Mayginnes (Fr.)
QB	4	Gage Gubrud (Sr.)	18	Anthony Gordon (Sr.)
RB	21	Max Borghi (So.)		Jamir Thomas (Fr.)

DEFENSE (6)

Returning Starters in Bold

DE	30	Nnamdi Oguayo (Sr.)	44	Tristan Brock (Sr.)
DT	92	**Will Rodgers III (Jr.)**	95	Ahmir Crowder (Fr.)
NT	9	Lamonte McDougle (So.)	90	Misiona Aiolupotea-Pei (Sr.)
RUSH	20	Dominick Silvels (Jr.)	**27**	**Willie Taylor III (So.)**
MLB	37	Justus Rogers (Jr.)	41	Dillon Sherman (Jr.)
WLB	13	**Jahad Woods (Jr.)**	58	Fa'avae Fa'avae (So.)
NB	25	**Skyler Thomas (Jr.)**	32	Patrick Nunn (Fr.)
CB	4	**Marcus Strong (Sr.)**	5	Derrick Langford (So.)
CB	18	George Hicks III (Jr.)	8	Daniel Isom (Jr.)
S	34	**Jalen Thompson (Sr.)**	1	Tyrese Ross (Fr.)
S	26	Bryce Beekman (Jr.)	28	Chad Davis Jr. (So.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	40	Blake Mazza (So.)	KR	5	Travell Harris (So.)
P	94	Oscar Draguicevich (Jr.)	PR	6	Jamire Calvin (Jr.)

2018 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Gardner Minshew	662	468	4,779	38	9
Trey Tinsley	**9**	**7**	**63**	**1**	**0**

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD
James Williams	122	560	4.6	12
Max Borghi	**72**	**366**	**5.1**	**8**
Gardner Minshew	58	119	2.1	4

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
James Williams	83	613	7.4	4
Davontavean Martin	**69**	**685**	**9.9**	**8**
Dezmon Patmon	**61**	**816**	**13.4**	**5**
Max Borghi	**53**	**374**	**7.1**	**4**
Easop Winston Jr.	**52**	**654**	**12.6**	**8**

KICKING: **Blake Mazza, 10-15 FGs, 90 pts.**

TACKLES: Peyton Pelluer, 98; **Jahad Woods, 82**

SACKS: Peyton Pelluer, 4.5; **Dominick Silvels, 4.5**

INTERCEPTIONS: **Marcus Strong, 3**

Returning Players in **Bold**

SCOUTING THE COUGARS

OPPOSING COACHES SIZE UP WASHINGTON STATE

"No one understands how to manipulate the Air Raid like Mike Leach. There's always a little bit of a wrinkle or a minor adjustment every single year. … Mike always finds a quarterback. No one knew who Gardner Minshew was, and everyone expected a big step back after Luke Falk. So they're going to put a high-accuracy guy out there in Week 1 even if we have no idea who that is right now. … They have good running backs, too, especially the last couple years. They've been more creative there running the ball, and that offensive line doesn't get enough attention. They're huge. They're really well coached. … The secret for them is that they're going to show you the same seven or plays on film they'll run against you. It's all already out there. But the first two or three steps, the first few seconds of every one of those plays, they look almost exactly the same. It is impossible to defend something when post-snap, four or five diverse plays look almost identical. … Up until recently, you could still beat them by tackling well on defense and being in the right spot. What changed is that they're a lot better on defense. … Where the hell did they get a defensive line from? It's been a completely different deal for them on offense because they're not pressing anymore to score touchdowns every fifth play call."

Arizona **Wildcats**

National Forecast: **46** • Pac-12 South Prediction: **5** • Projected Record: **6-6, 3-6 Pac-12**

J.J. Taylor

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Kevin Sumlin
Record at School: 5-7 (1 year)
Career Record: 91-50 (11 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Noel Mazzone
Defensive Coordinator: Marcel Yates
Location: Tucson, AZ
Stadium: Arizona Stadium (55,675)

KEY WILDCATS

KHALIL TATE, QB He attempted to become a pocket passer in 2018, which wasn't efficient. "I know I left a lot on the table," he says.

J.J. TAYLOR, RB By gaining 1,434 yards as a sophomore, the elusive and quick Taylor has become one of the most feared offensive players in the Pac-12.

DONOVAN LAIE, OL Started all 12 games as a true freshman, and D-line coach Iona Uiagalelei says Laie "has a chance to play on Sundays."

KEY LOSSES

PJ JOHNSON, DL Size (335 pounds) and production (8.5 tackles for a loss) will be difficult to replace.

SHAWN POINDEXTER, WR Caught 11 TD passes because he was bigger (6'5") than most DBs.

DEMETRIUS FLANNIGAN-FOWLES, S He started 24 consecutive games in the secondary and was the most consistent DB of the last two seasons.

RISING STAR

Physical and explosive at 6'2", 200, freshman receiver **BOOBIE CURRY** enrolled at Arizona over the winter and immediately established himself as potential impact player. He set a Texas state record with 26 receptions in a game last fall as the main target of UA freshman QB Grant Gunnell.

Since Kevin Sumlin was hired to change the image and trajectory of Arizona's football program, the school has debuted a $16 million indoor training facility and spent $25 million to renovate portions of Arizona Stadium.

Yet on the field, the Wildcats lost road games by 41, 32 and 27 points; touted quarterback Khalil Tate was injured and dropped from 1,411 rushing yards to 224; and Arizona collapsed late in the final game of the season, losing to rival Arizona State 41–40.

Perhaps the two most significant additions to Arizona's program are assistant coaches. Former NFL standout DeMarco Murray now coaches the running backs, and ex-NFL offensive lineman Kyle DeVan now coaches Arizona's linemen. Both have engaging personalities and are in their early 30s, which should give Arizona's struggling recruiting efforts more production.

OFFENSE Tate was often undisciplined and didn't seem to grasp new offensive coordinator Noel Mazzone's system in 2018. His completion percentage dropped from 62 to 56, and he was often unwilling to leave the pocket and run, a skill that a year earlier made him the first player in Pac-12 history to be named Offensive Player of the Week four weeks in succession. "He's learning to be a quarterback," Mazzone said in spring camp. The Wildcats don't appear to have a ready replacement.

Junior tailback J.J. Taylor rushed for 1,434 yards and was a revelation, getting the most out of his size — 5'6", 184 pounds. If he stays healthy, he'll take considerable pressure off Tate and Arizona's receiving group, which lost its three most productive players. Senior Cedric Peterson (18 receptions 2018) is the most experienced returning wideout. He's a possession-type receiver. The Wildcats are hopeful that freshman Boobie Curry becomes the big-play receiver they've been lacking.

Sumlin's spring focus was on developing the offensive line, which lacks depth. One positive is that sophomore Donovan Laie has displayed all-conference skills and is expected to join senior tackle Cody Creason and senior center Josh McCauley in a leadership role while new linemen such as junior college transfers Josh Donovan and Paiton Fears break into the system. Those occupying backup spots on the offensive line have not played anything more than mop-up time.

DEFENSE Arizona finished 92nd nationally in total defense last year, preceded by finishes of 119th and 102nd. Sumlin has made progress on that side of the ball, though; his defensive front not only has suitable size with J.B. Brown and Finton Connolly, but new players Myles Tapusoa and Nahe Sulunga also pass the eye test. They'll be joined by three-year letterman Justin Belknap in a reworked defensive front. The problem is that there is little depth. Sophomore pass rusher Jalen Harris, however, has the look of a potential star-level player.

Arizona's linebacking unit is the strength of the club. Juniors Colin Schooler and Tony Fields are two-year

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	24	at Hawaii
Sept.	7	Northern Arizona
Sept.	14	Texas Tech
Sept.	28	UCLA
Oct.	5	at Colorado
Oct.	12	Washington
Oct.	19	at USC
Oct.	26	at Stanford
Nov.	2	Oregon State
Nov.	16	at Oregon
Nov.	23	Utah
Nov.	29	at Arizona State

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 5-7, 4-5 PAC-12

Sept.	1	BYU	L	23-28
Sept.	8	at Houston	L	18-45
Sept.	15	Southern Utah	W	62-31
Sept.	22	at Oregon State	W	35-14
Sept.	29	USC	L	20-24
Oct.	6	California	W	24-17
Oct.	12	at Utah	L	10-42
Oct.	20	at UCLA	L	30-31
Oct.	27	Oregon	W	44-15
Nov.	2	Colorado	W	42-34
Nov.	17	at Washington State	L	28-69
Nov.	24	Arizona State	L	40-41

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	PAC-12	NATIONAL
Scoring	31.3 ppg	3	43
Rushing	202.4 ypg	1	32
Passing	255.3 ypg	3	39
Total	457.7 ypg	1	24
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**PAC-12**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	32.6 ppg	10	98
Rushing	162.5 ypg	8	64
Passing	269.5 ypg	12	121
Total	432.0 ypg	10	92
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**PAC-12**	**NATIONAL**
-4	-0.33	8	91

2019 RECRUITS

1. Boobie Curry, WR, Houston, TX
2. Grant Gunnell, QB, The Woodlands, TX
3. Bobby Wolfe, CB, Houston, TX
4. Kwabena Watson, DE, Fresno, CA
5. Jaxen Turner, S, Perris, CA
6. Chris Roland, DB, Palmdale, CA
7. Myles Tapusoa, DT, Rose Park, UT*
8. Josh Donovan, OT, College Station, TX*
9. Jalen Johnson, WR, Eastvale, CA
10. Jamari Williams, OG, Sunrise, FL
11. Paiton Fears, OT, Mascotte, FL*
12. Jaden Mitchell, WR, Las Vegas, NV
13. Kane Bradford, DT, Dallas, TX
14. Michael Wiley, RB, Houston, TX
15. Trevon Mason, DT, Arlington, TX*
16. Maurice Gaines, CB, Oakland, CA
17. Jordan Morgan, OT, Tucson, AZ
18. Derrion Clark, LB, Dallas, TX
19. Eddie Siaumau, LB, Pago Pago, AS
20. Kyle Ostendorp, P, Phoenix, AZ

*junior college transfer

Recruits ranked according to the 247SportsComposite

Peter Brouillet

ADVANCED STATS

5 Factors: College Football's Most Important Stats

Field Position[1]		Rank
Offense	28.4	104
Defense	28.5	42
Margin	-0.1	75

Efficiency[2]		Rank
Offense	41.2%	78
Defense	41.5%	69
Margin	-0.3%	78

Explosiveness[3]		Rank
Offense	6.2	26
Defense	5.7	71
Margin	+0.5	47

Finishing Drives[4]		Rank
Offense	4.5	81
Defense	5.2	119
Margin	-0.7	112

Adjusted TO Margin[5]		Rank
Projected	0.6	65
Actual	-4	89
Margin	-4.6	111

KEY: 1-Average starting field position by yard line; **2**-Rate of successful plays (gaining 50% of necessary yards on 1st down, 70% on 2nd down, 100% on 3rd down); **3**-Explosiveness=yards per play; **4**-Points per trip inside 40-yard line; **5**-TO margin accounting for "luck" • Advanced stats provided by Bill Connelly of SB Nation

NUMBERS TO KNOW

88

No one spread defenses out like Arizona: The Wildcats forced defenders to make solo tackles 88 percent of the time, most in FBS. Their tempo was also Sumlin-like: one snap every 23.1 seconds, 24th overall and second in the Pac-12.

3.3

When you spread defenses out, you can open the door for big plays. The Wildcats weren't efficient enough, but they still averaged 3.3 gains per game of 30-plus yards, seventh in FBS and first in the Pac-12.

-4.6

Based on national averages for fumble recovery rates and the ratio of interceptions to passes broken up, UA's turnover margin should have been about plus-0.6. Instead, it was minus-4. That 4.6-turnover difference was the second-most unlucky in the Pac-12.

starters. Schooler made 119 tackles, 21.5 of them for a loss, as a sophomore. Fields was also productive with 89 tackles. Junior Anthony Pandy had a strong break-in season last year and joins two-year starter Kylan Wilborn to give Arizona a competitive group.

The return of fifth-year senior cornerback Jace Whittaker was one of the most positive developments of the offseason. He missed 2018 with an elbow injury and is the leader of the defensive unit. He is surrounded by three players with a combined 44 starts — safeties Scottie Young Jr. and Tristan Cooper and cornerback Lorenzo Burns.

Developing younger players on defense is a must if Arizona is to hold up over 12 games; freshman corner Christian Roland-Wallace and freshman linebacker Day Day Coleman climbed the depth chart in spring drills and appear ready to contribute.

SPECIALISTS Junior Lucas Havrisik will no longer share placekicking duties. The job is his. He made just six field goals last season, so it's a risky proposition. Uncertainty also describes the punting situation. Freshman Kyle Ostendorp will challenge senior Matt Aragon to replace Dylan Klumpf, one of the league's top punters last year.

FINAL ANALYSIS Many in college football expected Arizona to challenge for the Pac-12 South title a year ago, but that expectation dissolved in the space of eight days as the Wildcats lost to BYU and Houston.

There is much less positive energy in Tucson this year. Tate struggled so much from start to finish that the club's quarterbacking — believed to be the strength of the program — is now an uncertainty. If Tate comes close to matching his 2017 form, using his considerable scrambling skills, Arizona should be a tough out.

Arizona's schedule isn't favorable. It plays road games at USC, Stanford, Oregon and Arizona State. The Wildcats are 3–15 in conference road games the last four years, losing by a cumulative 344 points.

This year, Arizona should have some break-in time, against Hawaii and Northern Arizona, to identify starters on the offensive and defensive lines and to determine if Tate understands and can effectively operate Mazzone's offense.

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (8)

WR	18	**Cedric Peterson (Sr.)**	1	Drew Dixon (So.)
WR	5	Brian Casteel (Jr.)	2	Boobie Curry (Fr.)
WR	86	Stanley Berryhill (So.)	88	Tre Adams (Fr.)
LT	76	**Cody Creason (Sr.)**	54	**Bryson Cain (Jr.)**
LG	74	Paiton Fears (So.)	60	Mykee Irving (Fr.)
C	50	**Josh McCauley (Sr.)**	66	Robert Congel (So.)
RG	56	Josh Donovan (Jr.)	63	Steven Bailey (Sr.)
RT	78	**Donovan Laie (So.)**	72	Edgar Burrola (Sr.)
TE	81	**Bryce Wolma (Jr.)**	82	Zach Williams (Fr.)
QB	14	**Khalil Tate (Sr.)**	17	Grant Gunnell (Fr.)
RB	21	**J.J. Taylor (Jr.)**	23	Gary Brightwell (Jr.)

DEFENSE (6)

Returning Starters in Bold

DL	12	**J.B. Brown (Jr.)**	58	Nahe Sulunga (Fr.)
DL	86	Justin Belknap (Sr.)	99	Myles Tapusoa (Jr.)
DL	91	Finton Connolly (Sr.)	51	Lee Anderson (Sr.)
DL	49	Jalen Harris (So.)	81	Jalen Cochran (Jr.)
LB	1	**Tony Fields (Jr.)**	9	Day Day Coleman (Fr.)
LB	7	**Colin Schooler (Jr.)**	8	Anthony Pandy (Jr.)
LB	14	**Kylan Wilborn (Jr.)**	11	Troy Young (Jr.)
CB	17	Jace Whittaker (Sr.)	5	Christian Young (So.)
CB	2	**Lorenzo Burns (Jr.)**	4	Christian Roland-Wallace (Fr.)
S	6	**Scottie Young Jr. (Jr.)**	13	Chacho Ulloa (Sr.)
S	31	Tristan Cooper (Sr.)	3	Jarrius Wallace (Jr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	43	Lucas Havrisik (Jr.)	**KR**	21	J.J. Taylor (Jr.)
P		Kyle Ostendorp (Fr.)	**PR**	23	Gary Brightwell (Jr.)

2018 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Khalil Tate	302	170	2,530	26	8
Rhett Rodriguez	83	43	516	3	2

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD
J.J. Taylor	255	1,434	5.6	6
Gary Brightwell	91	525	5.8	3
Khalil Tate	74	224	3.0	2
Darrius Smith	23	98	4.3	1

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Shun Brown	64	655	10.2	6
Shawn Poindexter	42	759	18.1	11
Tony Ellison	29	525	18.1	6
Devaughn Cooper	18	368	20.4	0

KICKING: Josh Pollack, 13-16 FGs, 56 pts.; **Lucas Havrisik, 6-11 FGs, 40 pts.**

TACKLES: Colin Schooler, 119; Tony Fields, 89

SACKS: J.B. Brown, 3.5; Colin Schooler, 3.5

INTERCEPTIONS: Scottie Young Jr., 3

Returning Players in **Bold**

SCOUTING THE WILDCATS

OPPOSING COACHES SIZE UP ARIZONA

"Everything runs through how well Khalil Tate is going to play. If he would've run the ball more last year, they might have won more games just on that. … They're always a little undersized on defense; that hasn't changed much since (Kevin) Sumlin's guys have been recruiting. It was a huge problem with the last staff, too. … It's more or less what you saw at Texas A&M without some of the size you get with Texas receivers and defensive backs. They want to go very fast, no tight ends, very detached. It's hard to tell how much Tate is actually reading on that offense. It looks like he's just freelancing a lot; whether it's a keep read or a give read, he ends up making a huge play. He's scary that way. … They actually fit in really well with most of the current Pac-12 in what kind of guys they can get and what they want to do with them. … Remember that they were a little late getting in there as a staff. It looked like they really didn't have a grasp on that roster until about halfway into the season, so it was a real learning on the fly type of coaching season. … They don't really have a defensive identity, and they don't have a pipeline to bring guys in that are any faster or bigger. Keeping Marcel Yates was a surprise; the kids love him, but his defenses were an absolute mess when he coached for RichRod."

Arizona State **Sun Devils**

National Forecast: **45** • Pac-12 South Prediction: **4** • Projected Record: **6-6, 4-5 Pac-12**

Eno Benjamin

In stark contrast to how he believes his team will perform this season, Herm Edwards spent much of the spring hobbling around Arizona State's football facility on crutches after offseason knee replacement surgery. "This is going to get interesting when these new guys show up because they're going to be fast — they're going to be faster," the second-year coach said.

The Sun Devils surprised observers last season by significantly outpacing their last-place forecast and competing for the South title into the second half of November. If Edwards is right, ASU could again race past expectations due to a rapidly improving defense and one of the Pac-12's most explosive rushing attacks.

OFFENSE Star running back Eno Benjamin will operate behind an experienced offensive line as he looks to break his own single-season rushing record set last year when the Sun Devils were the lone Power 5 program to have a 1,500-yard rusher, 3,000-yard passer and 1,000-yard receiver. Replicating last year's production, however, will be a challenge for Benjamin given that the team's other two offensive pillars, quarterback Manny Wilkins and wide receiver N'Keal Harry, have departed.

Opponents are going to load up the box and force the team's new quarterback, whether it be junior Dillon Sterling-Cole or true freshman Jayden Daniels, to beat man coverage on the perimeter. Daniels showed promise during spring practices as an early enrollee and could eventually emerge as the starter.

Athletic senior receiver Brandon Aiyuk is likely to explode into a 50-plus-catch player after assimilating out of the junior college ranks as a part-time starter. Junior Frank Darby is one of the Pac-12's best deep-ball threats, though he's still developing as a route runner. Senior slot receiver Kyle Williams has more than 100 career receptions and is an ultra-reliable blocker.

Depth is a legitimate question across the board, though there are some promising youngsters in the fold, including speedy redshirt freshman wideout Geordon Porter and redshirt freshman running back A.J. Carter. Some key backups, including senior receivers John Humphrey and Ryan Newsome, have struggled to stay healthy.

Up front, center Cohl Cabral will try to improve upon a second-team All-Pac-12 season after contemplating an early NFL declaration. He's likely to be one of five seniors across the line, with Zach Robertson, Steven Miller and Alex Losoya all having ample starting experience.

DEFENSE Edwards and coordinator Danny Gonzales set a great foundation last season despite an experience gap that led ASU to play as the youngest defensive unit in major college football. The Sun Devils are feeling a lot better heading into the second year of their build out, having lost only three regular starters. They'll return their top two tacklers, linebackers Merlin Robertson and Darien Butler, both of whom were true freshmen last season, with Robertson named the Pac-12 Defensive Freshman of the Year. A third freshman linebacker, Tyler Johnson,

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Herm Edwards
Record at School: 7-6 (1 year)
Career Record: 7-6 (1 year)
Offensive Coordinator: Rob Likens
Defensive Coordinator: Danny Gonzales
Location: Tempe, AZ
Stadium: Sun Devil Stadium (65,870)

KEY SUN DEVILS

ENO BENJAMIN, RB Set a school record with 1,642 rushing yards on his way to first-team All-Pac-12 honors. Became the first ASU player to ever carry the ball 300 times in a season.

MERLIN ROBERTSON, LB Third player in school history to earn Defensive Freshman of the Year honors in the Pac-12 after leading the Devils in tackles (77), TFLs (8.5) and sacks (5.0).

COHL CABRAL, OL Earned second-team all-conference honors at center in his first season at the position.

KEY LOSSES

N'KEAL HARRY One of the top wide receivers in program history with 213 receptions for 2,889 yards and 22 touchdowns.

MANNY WILKINS Three-year starter broke a school record for consecutive pass attempts without an interception.

RENELL WREN One of the most physically dominant nose tackles in the Pac-12, Wren was an immovable object in the middle.

RISING STAR

The highest-rated prospect to sign with the program in the 2019 class, freshman QB **JAYDEN DANIELS** was also the best-performing newcomer in spring football, throwing just one interception in 15 practices and showcasing terrific accuracy and decision-making.

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	29	Kent State
Sept.	6	Sacramento State
Sept.	14	at Michigan State
Sept.	21	Colorado
Sept.	27	at California
Oct.	12	Washington State
Oct.	19	at Utah
Oct.	26	at UCLA
Nov.	9	USC
Nov.	16	at Oregon State
Nov.	23	Oregon
Nov.	29	Arizona

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 7-6, 5-4 PAC-12

Sept.	1	UTSA	W	49-7
Sept.	8	Michigan State	W	16-13
Sept.	15	at San Diego State	L	21-28
Sept.	22	at Washington	L	20-27
Sept.	29	Oregon State	W	52-24
Oct.	6	at Colorado	L	21-28
Oct.	18	Stanford	L	13-20
Oct.	27	at USC	W	38-35
Nov.	3	Utah	W	38-20
Nov.	10	UCLA	W	31-28
Nov.	17	at Oregon	L	29-31
Nov.	24	at Arizona	W	41-40
Dec.	15	vs. Fresno State #	L	20-31

#Las Vegas Bowl

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	PAC-12	NATIONAL
Scoring	29.9 ppg	4	59
Rushing	184.0 ypg	2	50
Passing	232.7 ypg	10	66
Total	416.7 ypg	4	51
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**PAC-12**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	25.5 ppg	7	50
Rushing	170.5 ypg	10	74
Passing	233.8 ypg	6	71
Total	404.4 ypg	8	73
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**PAC-12**	**NATIONAL**
+10	+0.77	1	11

2019 RECRUITS

1. Jayden Daniels, QB, San Bernardino, CA
2. Stephon Wright, DE, Los Angeles, CA
3. Joey Yellen, QB, Mission Viejo, CA
4. Kejuan Markham, S, Long Beach, CA
5. Jordan Clark, CB, Baton Rouge, LA
6. Keon Markham, DB, Long Beach, CA
7. Ethan Long, QB, West Linn, OR
8. Nolan Matthews, TE, Frisco, TX
9. Dohnovan West, C, Mission Hills, CA
10. LaDarius Henderson, OT, Waxahachie, TX
11. Connor Soelle, ATH, Scottsdale, AZ
12. Amiri Johnson, DE, Pomona, CA
13. Willie Harts, CB, Pittsburg, CA
14. Jordan Kerley, WR, Austin, TX
15. Ricky Pearsall, WR, Tempe, AZ
16. Anthonie Cooper, DE, Goodyear, AZ
17. Roman DeWys, OT, Chandler, AZ
18. Andre Johnson, WR, Tolleson, AZ
19. Alijah Bates, OT, Colorado Springs, CO
20. Ben Scott, OT, Honolulu, HI
21. Elijah Juarez, LB, Long Beach, CA
22. T.J. Pesefea, DL, Sacramento, CA*

*junior college transfer

Recruits ranked according to the 247SportsComposite

Peter Brouillet

ADVANCED STATS

5 Factors: College Football's Most Important Stats

Field Position[1]		Rank
Offense	29.0	95
Defense	26.0	4
Margin	**+3.0**	**34**

Efficiency[2]		Rank
Offense	43.8%	44
Defense	45.9%	110
Margin	**-2.1%**	**92**

Explosiveness[3]		Rank
Offense	6.0	46
Defense	5.7	70
Margin	**+0.3**	**62**

Finishing Drives[4]		Rank
Offense	4.6	67
Defense	4.4	55
Margin	**+0.2**	**61**

Adjusted TO Margin[5]		Rank
Projected	0.4	68
Actual	10	11
Margin	**+9.6**	**4**

KEY: 1-Average starting field position by yard line; **2**-Rate of successful plays (gaining 50% of necessary yards on 1st down, 70% on 2nd down, 100% on 3rd down); **3**-Explosiveness=yards per play; **4**-Points per trip inside 40-yard line; **5**-TO margin accounting for "luck" • Advanced stats provided by Bill Connelly of SB Nation

NUMBERS TO KNOW

+9.6

Based on national averages for fumble recovery rates and the ratio of interceptions to passes broken up, ASU's turnover margin should have been about plus-0.4. Instead, it was plus-10 — 9.6 turnovers higher, the fourth-largest dose of good turnovers luck in FBS.

+5.6

Turnovers create field position advantages: ASU's field position margin improved by 5.6 yards per possession, from minus-2.6 yards per drive to plus-3.0.

8

Bend, don't break: ASU allowed a 45.9 percent success rate (percentage of plays that gained at least 50 percent of necessary yardage on first down, 70 percent on second, or 100 percent on third or fourth), 110th in FBS, but persisted with big-play prevention: They allowed just eight gains of 40-plus yards all year, 11th fewest.

may have shown the most NFL potential of the group due to his remarkable size and athleticism.

Led by returning cornerbacks Kobe Williams and Chase Lucas and safety Aashari Crosswell, a secondary that was a laughingstock just two years ago could now be one of the most intimidating in the conference. Williams was rarely beaten on big plays last season, and Lucas and Crosswell have first- or second-day NFL Draft potential.

Senior safety Tyler Whiley looked great in preseason camp last year before suffering a season-ending ankle injury. After receiving a sixth year of eligibility, he hasn't lost a step. Cam Phillips should battle incoming freshman Kejuan Markham for a starting nod at the team's other safety spot, with Edwards encouraged by the overall speed being added to the secondary.

The biggest challenge will be up front, where the Sun Devils must replace Renell Wren in the middle. Nose tackle, where big sophomore D.J. Davidson will battle experienced junior Shannon Forman, is more of an unknown than the two end positions in the 3-3-5 scheme. Senior George Lea played inside for much of last season before shifting outside and excelling as a starter, and Jermayne Lole looked like a future all-conference player as a freshman in 2018. The additions of Rice graduate transfer Roe Wilkins, junior college transfer T.J. Pesefea and touted freshman Stephon Wright should round out the group.

SPECIALISTS Junior Brandon Ruiz is one of the best kickers in the Pac-12 after making 18-of-22 field goal attempts as a sophomore, including 4-of-5 from 40-49 yards. The Sun Devils believe they've upgraded at punter with the addition of Michael Turk, a transfer from Lafayette. Aiyuk has a chance to be very good as a punt returner if his workload isn't too great at receiver, with Crosswell and Lucas other options. Porter appears in line to be the kick returner.

FINAL ANALYSIS With a veteran offensive line blocking for an elite running back, and with an improving defense, the Sun Devils have the makings of a team poised to surprise. Edwards had a better first season than most pundits expected, and there's reason to believe it could happen again if the Sun Devils get serviceable quarterback play.

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (7)

WR	2	Brandon Aiyuk (Sr.)	6	Geordon Porter (Fr.)
WR	**84**	**Frank Darby (Jr.)**	12	John Humphrey (Sr.)
WR	**10**	**Kyle Williams (Sr.)**	17	Ryan Newsome (Sr.)
LT	**51**	**Zach Robertson (Sr.)**	71	Steven Miller (Sr.)
LG	**56**	**Alex Losoya (Sr.)**	50	Jarrett Bell (Fr.)
C	**73**	**Cohl Cabral (Sr.)**	50	Jarrett Bell (Fr.)
RG	71	Steven Miller (Sr.)	72	Cade Cote (Sr.)
RT	63	Roy Hemsley (Sr.)	71	Steven Miller (Sr.)
TE	**87**	**Tommy Hudson (Sr.)**	86	Curtis Hodges (Jr.)
QB	15	Dillon Sterling-Cole (Jr.)	5	Jayden Daniels (Fr.)
RB	**3**	**Eno Benjamin (Jr.)**	31	Isaiah Floyd (Jr.)

DEFENSE (6)

Returning Starters in Bold

DE	90	Jermayne Lole (So.)		Roe Wilkins (Sr.)
DT	98	D.J. Davidson (So.)	**97**	**Shannon Forman (Jr.)**
DE	17	George Lea (Sr.)	9	Stephon Wright (Fr.)
OLB	**8**	**Merlin Robertson (So.)**	20	Khaylan Kearse-Thomas (Sr.)
ILB	**37**	**Darien Butler (So.)**	20	Khaylan Kearse-Thomas (Sr.)
OLB	41	Tyler Johnson (So.)	14	Stanley Lambert (Fr.)
CB	**24**	**Chase Lucas (Jr.)**	6	Timarcus Davis (So.)
CB	**5**	**Kobe Williams (Sr.)**	13	Keon Markham (Fr.)
S	**16**	**Aashari Crosswell (So.)**	4	Evan Fields (Jr.)
S	23	Tyler Whiley (Sr.)	16	Aashari Crosswell (So.)
S	15	Cam Phillips (Fr.)	12	Kejuan Markham (Fr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	1	Brandon Ruiz (Jr.)	**KR**	6	Geordon Porter (Fr.)
P	25	Michael Turk (So.)	**PR**	2	Brandon Aiyuk (Sr.)

2018 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Manny Wilkins	393	247	3,025	20	6

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD
Eno Benjamin	**300**	**1,642**	**5.5**	**16**
Manny Wilkins	112	452	4.0	8
Isaiah Floyd	**45**	**209**	**4.6**	**1**
Trelon Smith	11	56	5.1	0

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
N'Keal Harry	73	1,088	14.9	9
Kyle Williams	**44**	**449**	**10.2**	**2**
Eno Benjamin	**35**	**263**	**7.5**	**2**
Brandon Aiyuk	**33**	**474**	**14.4**	**3**

KICKING: **Brandon Ruiz, 18-22 FGs, 99 pts.**

TACKLES: **Merlin Robertson, 77; 2 players tied with 70**

SACKS: **Merlin Robertson, 5.0**

INTERCEPTIONS: **Aashari Crosswell, 4**

Returning Players in **Bold**

SCOUTING THE SUN DEVILS

OPPOSING COACHES SIZE UP ARIZONA STATE

"They weren't as talented last year as they had been, and they're losing a lot of really good players (Todd) Graham brought in. … They have a really good running back in Eno Benjamin; he could really be a breakout guy. He's excellent and could have a major year this season. … A lot of the conference coaches, we didn't know what to make of Herm Edwards when he came in. A lot of the coaches only knew him from what they saw on TV with the Chiefs and Jets, but they did some really interesting things. Did you see how they beat Michigan State? They ate the entire clock in the red zone to seal the game. There are a lot of chess moves you see with them. He made a big difference doing little things like that, which don't really show up in the media. … There's a lot of NFL decision-making on the team, especially on offense. You call it 'complementary football,' where every unit serves to assist the next one. … Losing Manny Wilkins is a big blow for them; he was really a resilient guy playing under all the changes he went through, and he made the new staff's first year a lot easier. They're going to have to build one from scratch now. Same goes with the top receiver they had (N'Keal Harry). I don't think they have another one of him ready to go either."

Colorado **Buffaloes**

National Forecast: **69** • Pac-12 South Prediction: **6** • Projected Record: **4-8, 2-7 Pac-12**

Laviska Shenault Jr.

Just two years ago, Colorado was the defending Pac-12 South champion with reigning National Coach of the Year Mike MacIntyre leading the way into a title defense. Those days seem like ancient history after back-to-back 5–7 seasons, the firing of MacIntyre and the hiring of former Georgia and Alabama defensive coordinator Mel Tucker in the offseason.

This is Tucker's first full-time head coaching job (he was interim coach of the NFL's Jacksonville Jaguars for five games in 2011), and he wasted very little time laying the foundation. He's got a "no excuses" attitude and spent the offseason instilling intensity and physicality.

At CU, Tucker doesn't have the talent he had to work with at Georgia and Alabama, but "the cupboards are not bare here," he says. Now, it's Tucker's task to take that talent and get the Buffaloes back on track.

OFFENSE Under coordinator Jay Johnson, CU will have a different look, using pro-style sets and prioritizing the run game. Several familiar faces return, however.

Senior QB Steven Montez has had his ups and downs and is 12–15 as a starter, but he's improved each year and made a positive impression on his new coaches in the spring. Physically, he's got all the tools to be a star, but he will need to take another step above the neck to be elite.

CU is loaded at receiver, and it starts with Laviska Shenault Jr., who was a Heisman Trophy candidate at the mid-point of last season before an injury slowed him down. K.D. Nixon was overshadowed a bit, but he had a great season (52 catches for 636 yards) and can be explosive. Senior Tony Brown is reliable and a great complement to Shenault on the outside, while redshirt freshman Dimitri Stanley and sophomore Jaylon Jackson show star potential in the slot. Tight ends have caught a total of 18 passes in the last three years combined, but that's expected to change. Auburn grad transfer Jalen Harris, former walk-on Brady Russell and converted running back Beau Bisharat lead that group.

While the run game will be essential, CU's scholarship running backs have a combined 11 career rushing attempts — all by sophomore Alex Fontenot, who stood out in the spring. Tucker likes to use multiple backs, so redshirt freshmen Deion Smith and Jarek Broussard and true freshmen Joe Davis and Jaren Mangham could all get opportunities. Fontenot and Smith could be the lead backs, but Mangham might ultimately become the best of the bunch.

CU's line has been a weakness; in 2018, the Buffs ranked 11th in the Pac-12 in sacks allowed (2.83 per game) and 10th in yards per carry (3.8). Grad transfer Arlington Hambright, a part-time starter at left tackle for Oklahoma State last year, could be a major boost. The Buffs will also lean on senior Tim Lynott, who could play center or guard, along with sophomore tackle William Sherman and sophomore Colby Pursell, who started every game at center last year.

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Mel Tucker
Record at School: First Season
Career Record: First Season
Offensive Coordinator: Jay Johnson
Defensive Coordinator: Tyson Summers
Location: Boulder, CO
Stadium: Folsom Field (50,183)

KEY BUFFALOES

NATE LANDMAN, LB Hard-hitting, instinctive playmaker in the middle of the defense; he's now an upperclassman and team leader.

STEVEN MONTEZ, QB Has started every game the last two years and could leave as CU's all-time leading passer.

LAVISKA SHENAULT JR., WR A 2018 Heisman Trophy candidate before injuries. Had 86 catches for 1,011 yards and six TDs (plus five rushing TDs) in only nine games.

KEY LOSSES

DREW LEWIS, LB Exceptional athlete who played inside and outside linebacker.

TRAVON MCMILLIAN, RB Racked up 1,009 yards rushing in his only season at Colorado after transferring from Virginia Tech.

EVAN WORTHINGTON, S Maybe the best player on defense when healthy; the Buffs were significantly better with him on the field.

RISING STAR

Sophomore safety **HASAAN HYPOLITE** was limited in spring after shoulder surgery, but he was impressive enough for Mel Tucker to say that he "is going to be one of our better players in the fall." He will get every opportunity, as the Buffs lack depth and experience at safety.

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	30	vs. Colorado State #
Sept.	7	Nebraska
Sept.	14	Air Force
Sept.	21	at Arizona State
Oct.	5	Arizona
Oct.	11	at Oregon
Oct.	19	at Washington State
Oct.	25	USC
Nov.	2	at UCLA
Nov.	9	Stanford
Nov.	23	Washington
Nov.	30	at Utah

#Denver

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 5-7, 2-7 PAC-12

Aug.	31	vs. Colorado State #	W	45-13
Sept.	8	at Nebraska	W	33-28
Sept.	15	New Hampshire	W	45-14
Sept.	28	UCLA	W	38-16
Oct.	6	Arizona State	W	28-21
Oct.	13	at USC	L	20-31
Oct.	20	at Washington	L	13-27
Oct.	27	Oregon State (ot)	L	34-41
Nov.	2	at Arizona	L	34-42
Nov.	10	Washington State	L	7-31
Nov.	17	Utah	L	7-30
Nov.	24	at California	L	21-33

#Denver

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	PAC-12	NATIONAL
Scoring	27.1 ppg	7	80
Rushing	143.0 ypg	9	100
Passing	249.6 ypg	4	46
Total	392.6 ypg	8	75
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**PAC-12**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	27.3 ppg	9	70
Rushing	145.6 ypg	6	44
Passing	234.7 ypg	7	74
Total	380.3 ypg	5	52
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**PAC-12**	**NATIONAL**
-4	-0.33	8	91

2019 RECRUITS

1. Jashua Allen, LB, Portland, OR*
2. La'ontae Shenault, WR, DeSoto, TX
3. Jaren Mangham, RB, Detroit, MI
4. Marvin Ham, LB, Belleville, MI
5. Braedin Huffman-Dixon, WR, Eastvale, CA
6. Tarik Luckett, WR, Lynwood, CA
7. Mark Perry, S, Rancho Cucamonga, CA
8. Austin Johnson, OG, Littleton, CO
9. K.J. Trujillo, CB, Buena Park, CA
10. Alec Pell, LB, Englewood, CO
11. Lloyd Murray Jr., DT, Wichita Falls, TX
12. Jake Wiley, OG, Centennial, CO
13. Na'im Rodman, DT, Lakewood, CA
14. Joe Davis, RB, Littleton, CO
15. Trustin Oliver, DB, Parker, CO
16. Janaz Jordan, DT, Hampton, VA*
17. Jamar Montgomery, LB, Birmingham, AL*
18. Austin Williams, DT, Tifton, GA
19. D.J. Oats, DB, Arlington, TX
20. Vaatofu Sauvao, OG, Fagatoto, AS*
21. Jayden Simon, DT, Tacoma, WA
22. Valentin Senn, OT, Volders, Austria
23. Jeremiah Doss, DE, Flowood, MS*
24. Nikko Pohahau, OT, Redwood City, CA
25. Quinn Perry, LB, Pacific Palisades, CA*

*junior college transfer

Recruits ranked according to the 247SportsComposite

Tim Clark

ADVANCED STATS

5 Factors: College Football's Most Important Stats

Field Position[1]		Rank
Offense	29.2	87
Defense	28.8	53
Margin	+0.4	65

Efficiency[2]		Rank
Offense	38.0%	108
Defense	40.1%	54
Margin	-2.1%	90

Explosiveness[3]		Rank
Offense	5.4	94
Defense	5.2	38
Margin	+0.2	69

Finishing Drives[4]		Rank
Offense	4.7	52
Defense	4.6	76
Margin	+0.1	67

Adjusted TO Margin[5]		Rank
Projected	-4.3	107
Actual	-4	89
Margin	+0.3	59

KEY: **1**-Average starting field position by yard line; **2**-Rate of successful plays (gaining 50% of necessary yards on 1st down, 70% on 2nd down, 100% on 3rd down); **3**-Explosiveness=yards per play; **4**-Points per trip inside 40-yard line; **5**-TO margin accounting for "luck" • Advanced stats provided by Bill Connelly of SB Nation

NUMBERS TO KNOW

24.6

CU opponents threw 175 incompletions, and only 24.6 percent of them were either intercepted or broken up by Buffalo defenders. That ratio was third lowest in FBS. CU's total passes defensed have fallen from 89 in 2016 (second in FBS) to 68 in 2017 (24th) to 43 (106th).

10.5

How important was Laviska Shenault Jr.'s vertical presence to the Buffaloes? They were 4–0 when he averaged at least 10.5 yards per catch in 2018 and 1–7 when he either didn't or didn't play.

17

Colorado registered seven top-15 finishes in the AP poll in the 13 seasons between 1989 and 2001, but the Buffaloes haven't logged one in the 17 years since. They've only even spent time in the top 15 in two of those seasons.

DEFENSE Tucker has led some of the best defenses in the country in recent years, so his standard is high. It might take some time for the Buffs to reach that standard, however, despite some solid pieces to build around.

Inside linebacker Nate Landman is a hard hitter who is always around the ball, and he's emerging as a leader. The Buffs lack experience around him and dipped into the junior college ranks for reinforcements. At outside backer, Carson Wells emerged last year, but the group has to step up.

Up front, former junior college transfer Mustafa Johnson was a disruptive force in his first year with the Buffs, while sophomore Terrance Lang continues to improve. Several players need to mature in a hurry, though, including redshirt freshman nose tackle Jalen Sami. Nine of the 11 scholarship linemen have never played a snap at CU, and six have never played in a college game. The Buffs are expected to add Auburn grad transfer Jaunta'vius Johnson in the summer.

Senior Davion Taylor, who has sprinter speed and NFL-type athleticism, will be featured in the Star position. At corner, Delrick Abrams Jr. and Chris Miller are talented, but both have to stay healthy and become consistent. There's almost no experience at safety, but several players will compete for starting roles, and the Buffs like the potential of sophomore Hasaan Hypolite and incoming freshman Mark Perry.

SPECIALISTS Punter Alex Kinney is back for a fifth year after missing most of 2018 with a broken collarbone. Placekicker James Stefanou comes into his third year healthy after missing a good chunk of last year. Kickoff specialist Davis Price is back for a third year in that role.

FINAL ANALYSIS CU has been to one bowl game (2016) in 11 years and is desperate to become a consistent winner. Tucker brings a winning pedigree, as he was part of national title teams at Ohio State (2002) and Alabama (2015) and coached in the 2017 title game with Georgia. Colorado is a long way from reaching that level, but talent hasn't been the Buffs' issue the last few years, and Tucker doesn't view this as a rebuild. Tucker's approach has been well received by players — and those in the athletic department — and the expectation, internally, is to get to the postseason this year.

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (6)

WR	2	**Laviska Shenault Jr. (Jr.)**	18	Tony Brown (Sr.)
WR	3	**K.D. Nixon (Jr.)**	22	Daniel Arias (So.)
WR	14	Dimitri Stanley (Fr.)	10	Jaylon Jackson (So.)
LT		Arlington Hambright (Sr.)	76	Frank Fillip (So.)
LG	70	Casey Roddick (Fr.)	73	Jacob Moretti (So.)
C	65	**Colby Pursell (So.)**	55	Brett Tonz (Sr.)
RG	56	**Tim Lynott (Sr.)**	58	Kary Kutsch (Jr.)
RT	78	**William Sherman (So.)**	54	Kanan Ray (Fr.)
TE	9	Jalen Harris (Sr.)	38	Brady Russell (So.)
QB	12	**Steven Montez (Sr.)**	7	Tyler Lytle (So.)
RB	8	Alex Fontenot (So.)	20	Deion Smith (Fr.)

DEFENSE (5)

Returning Starters in Bold

DE	34	**Mustafa Johnson (Jr.)**		Janaz Jordan (Jr.)
NT	99	Jalen Sami (Fr.)		Jaunta'vius Johnson (Sr.)
DE	54	Terrance Lang (So.)	18	Jeremiah Doss (So.)
OLB	26	Carson Wells (So.)	44	Jacob Callier (So.)
ILB	53	**Nate Landman (Jr.)**	36	Akil Jones (Jr.)
ILB	31	Jonathan Van Diest (So.)		Jashua Allen (Jr.)
OLB	20	**Davion Taylor (Sr.)**	42	Nu'umotu Falo Jr. (Sr.)
CB	14	Chris Miller (So.)	4	**Dante Wigley (Sr.)**
CB	1	**Delrick Abrams Jr. (Sr.)**	2	Ronnie Blackmon (Jr.)
SS	5	Hasaan Hypolite (So.)	8	Trey Udoffia (Jr.)
FS	3	Derrion Rakestraw (Jr.)	23	Isaiah Lewis (So.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	48	James Stefanou (Jr.)	KR	2	Ronnie Blackmon (Jr.)
P	89	Alex Kinney (Sr.)	PR	2	Ronnie Blackmon (Jr.)

2018 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Steven Montez	**399**	**258**	**2,849**	**19**	**9**
Sam Noyer	**14**	**8**	**60**	**0**	**2**
Tyler Lytle	**5**	**4**	**55**	**0**	**1**

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD
Travon McMillian	201	1,009	5.0	7
Steven Montez	**94**	**238**	**2.5**	**4**
Kyle Evans	69	201	2.9	3
Beau Bisharat	**21**	**143**	**6.8**	**0**

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Laviska Shenault Jr.	**86**	**1,011**	**11.8**	**6**
K.D. Nixon	**52**	**636**	**12.2**	**4**
Tony Brown	**32**	**333**	**10.4**	**1**
Juwann Winfree	28	324	11.6	2

KICKING: **James Stefanou, 5-8 FGs, 45 pts.**
TACKLES: **Nate Landman, 105;** Rick Gamboa, 71
SACKS: **Mustafa Johnson, 8.5**
INTERCEPTIONS: **Nate Landman, 2**

Returning Players in **Bold**

SCOUTING THE BUFFALOES

OPPOSING COACHES SIZE UP COLORADO

"A big unknown here, at least in Year 1. A lot like Herm (Edwards) coming in last year, just not a staff the West Coast is familiar with. There was a lot of respect for Mike MacIntyre; you saw him build and build and turn that program into something it hadn't been in decades. … We're not really sure how that fell apart. They fought some key injuries. They made a decision to go fast and score a lot of points because they had some guys last year who could do that, but it wasn't really their identity. That can't work for everyone. … There's talent coming back here, especially at wide receiver. The strength for the whole team will be in the passing game. We think they're going to use a lot of shift-motion, some Pistol maybe, but they're not trying to tempo you. They want to run the ball, and (Mel) Tucker is a defensive guy so it's doubtful he wants to trade possessions. Then again, so was Mac. That job isn't going to offer you ideal personnel every year. … This year they'll go however far Steven Montez can take them. If they're smart they'll switch over the system gradually and not force him to run as much as they probably want him to. He's got experience. He's won in this league. … Everyone's watching to see how Tucker recruits, or really where. Colorado needs big help in either Texas or California, like a lot of schools."

UCLA **Bruins**

National Forecast: **42** • Pac-12 South Prediction: **2** • Projected Record: **7-5, 6-3 Pac-12**

Joshua Kelley

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Chip Kelly
Record at School: 3-9 (1 year)
Career Record: 49-16 (5 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Justin Frye
Defensive Coordinator: Jerry Azzinaro
Location: Los Angeles, CA
Stadium: Rose Bowl (91,136)

KEY BRUINS

DORIAN THOMPSON-ROBINSON, QB Dual threat averaged nearly seven yards per attempt as a true freshman but trailed off following a shoulder injury.

JOSHUA KELLEY, RB UCLA's first 1,000-yard rusher since 2015; scored at least one touchdown in each of the team's final eight games.

DARNAY HOLMES, DB Has led the team in interceptions the last two seasons and provided a boost on special teams.

KEY LOSSES

CALEB WILSON, TE Top tight end in the country last season with a team-high 965 receiving yards and four touchdowns.

ANDRE JAMES, OT Three-year starter was UCLA's top offensive lineman at multiple positions up front.

JAELAN PHILLIPS, LB Once the top recruit in the country, he transferred to Miami (Fla.) after previously medically retiring with the Bruins in December.

RISING STAR

UCLA has struggled to cobble together a dependable offensive line for several years, but there's hope that top-rated recruit **SEAN RHYAN** can develop into a mainstay early on. The multi-sport athlete is a great scheme fit and could start at either guard or tackle as a true freshman.

To say optimism was running high in Westwood following the hiring of Chip Kelly would be an understatement as vast as Los Angeles itself. After all, the Bruins didn't just hire somebody who had turned the Pac-12 on its head with a 46–7 record at Oregon; they also beat out other college football powers for his services and had high hopes that conference championships and big wins would follow in short order.

It didn't take long for reality to hit, though. The program that Kelly took over was far from the ready-made one he inherited at Oregon a decade ago. UCLA didn't prove to be merely a rebuilding job but rather a complete overhaul that would test the patience of its coaching staff, players and fan base as the Bruins lost their first five games — their worst start since 1943.

Under the rubble of that ignominious start, however, were a few signs of life. Underclassmen stepped up, and mental mistakes that regularly plagued UCLA teams were less prevalent. There were close games against Arizona State and Stanford late, plus a thrilling victory over crosstown rival USC that served as the highlight of Kelly's debut campaign. It was still far from the lofty win totals some had predicted, but there's certainly nowhere to go but up for the powder blues in 2019.

OFFENSE Kelly made his name on innovative tempo and unique concepts with the spread offense, but his first year in charge of UCLA was hardly a facsimile of his high-flying days at Oregon. The Bruins were 98th in the country in scoring and failed to crack the top 50 nationally in virtually any major offensive category in 2018.

Quarterback Dorian Thompson-Robinson was widely praised as the future at the position, but the present maybe came a bit too early, as he was thrown into the fire under center just two quarters into the season. An injury limited his effectiveness (57.7 percent passing, seven touchdowns, four interceptions) during seven starts, but the staff is hopeful that the offseason will allow "DTR" to fully develop into the type of player who can beat you through the air or on the ground.

It helps, of course, that he'll have a supporting cast full of speedy playmakers. Tailback Joshua Kelley was a revelation in the backfield, accounting for 1,243 yards, 289 of which came against USC. He'll be spelled by undersized Kazmeir Allen and Martell Irby, but Kelley will be the focal point of the offense and should contend for first-team All-Pac-12 honors.

Senior Theo Howard will be the top option in the passing game (677 yards, four touchdowns last year), but the team will need to find more production from a deep — yet young and unproven — group of wideouts behind him. Even though terrific tight end Caleb Wilson is gone, don't be shocked if you see more than one tight end on the field as well, with top options Devin Asiasi and Jordan Wilson.

The interior of the offensive line will be a strength, with center Boss Tagaloa and both guards back in 2019.

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	29	at Cincinnati
Sept.	7	San Diego State
Sept.	14	Oklahoma
Sept.	21	at Washington State
Sept.	28	at Arizona
Oct.	5	Oregon State
Oct.	17	at Stanford
Oct.	26	Arizona State
Nov.	2	Colorado
Nov.	16	at Utah
Nov.	23	at USC
Nov.	30	California

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 3-9, 3-6 PAC-12

Sept.	1	Cincinnati	L	17-26
Sept.	8	at Oklahoma	L	21-49
Sept.	15	Fresno State	L	14-38
Sept.	28	at Colorado	L	16-38
Oct.	6	Washington	L	24-31
Oct.	13	at California	W	37-7
Oct.	20	Arizona	W	31-30
Oct.	26	Utah	L	10-41
Nov.	3	at Oregon	L	21-42
Nov.	10	at Arizona State	L	28-31
Nov.	17	USC	W	34-27
Nov.	24	Stanford	L	42-49

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	PAC-12	NATIONAL
Scoring	24.6 ppg	11	98
Rushing	154.8 ypg	8	86
Passing	237.8 ypg	9	62
Total	392.6 ypg	8	75
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**PAC-12**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	34.1 ppg	11	104
Rushing	199.4 ypg	11	100
Passing	245.5 ypg	9	88
Total	444.9 ypg	11	102
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**PAC-12**	**NATIONAL**
+1	+0.08	6	57

2019 RECRUITS

1. Sean Rhyan, OT, San Juan Capistrano, CA
2. Mike Martinez, TE, Santa Ana, CA
3. Shamar Martin, CB, San Diego, CA
4. Charles Njoku, WR, Wayne, NJ
5. William Nimmo, S, Santa Ana, CA
6. John Ward, LB, Palmdale, CA
7. Duke Clemens, OG, Honolulu, HI
8. Siale Liku, DT, Oakland, CA
9. Datona Jackson, DE, Union City, OH*
10. Beau Taylor, OG, Las Vegas, NV
11. Carl Jones, S, Bakersfield, CA
12. Jahmon McClendon, RB, Spring Valley, CA
13. Chase Griffin, QB, Hutto, TX
14. Kain Medrano, WR, Pueblo, CO
15. Josh Carlin, OG, Chatsworth, CA
16. Jaylen Erwin, WR, Charlotte, NC*
17. Noah Keeter, LB, Gainesville, FL
18. Hayden Harris, LB, Sammamish, WA
19. Keegan Jones, RB, Cleveland, TN

*junior college transfer

Recruits ranked according to the 247SportsComposite

Peter Brouillet

ADVANCED STATS

5 Factors: College Football's Most Important Stats

Field Position[1]		Rank
Offense	26.0	127
Defense	32.2	114
Margin	**-6.2**	**126**

Efficiency[2]		Rank
Offense	41.7%	73
Defense	47.2%	118
Margin	**-5.5%**	**105**

Explosiveness[3]		Rank
Offense	5.5	81
Defense	6.0	96
Margin	**-0.5**	**95**

Finishing Drives[4]		Rank
Offense	4.3	96
Defense	5.0	101
Margin	**-0.7**	**111**

Adjusted TO Margin[5]		Rank
Projected	1.2	56
Actual	1	57
Margin	**-0.2**	**64**

KEY: 1-Average starting field position by yard line; **2**-Rate of successful plays (gaining 50% of necessary yards on 1st down, 70% on 2nd down, 100% on 3rd down); **3**-Explosiveness=yards per play; **4**-Points per trip inside 40-yard line; **5**-TO margin accounting for "luck" • Advanced stats provided by Bill Connelly of SB Nation

NUMBERS TO KNOW

15/4

No disruption: The UCLA defense stuffed ball carriers at or behind the line on just 15 percent of non-sack rushes (122nd in FBS) and sacked quarterbacks on just four percent of pass attempts (126th).

1

According to the 247Sports Composite, UCLA averaged 10.6 four- or five-star prospects per signing class between 2012-18, never signing fewer than seven. The Bruins signed one in 2019.

0.250

UCLA's win percentage in 2018 was 0.250, its worst since 1971 (2–7–1). If there's any consolation here, it's that the Bruins went 9–2 just two years later. Similarly, the last time the Bruins won three or fewer games was in 1989 (3–7–1); two years later, they were 9–3. Things change quickly out West.

Sean Rhyan, the top-rated recruit in the 2019 class, could be in the mix to play early on, but depth is far from ideal up front.

DEFENSE UCLA gave up 30 or more points in all but three games last year and can thank Oregon State's ineptness for preventing the Bruins from ranking dead last in the Pac-12 on defense. UCLA could not get off the field when it mattered most and failed to apply much pressure at all on opposing quarterbacks (119th nationally with 1.25 sacks per game).

But there are still some quality pieces returning on this side of the ball. The secondary has a chance to become one of the better units in the conference behind Darnay Holmes, Quentin Lake and Elijah Gates, while the linebacking corps has a number of different looks to throw at opponents. Key to the entire group could be senior Keisean Lucier-South, a former five-star recruit who finally started to show flashes of that potential with 46 tackles and four sacks. Josh Woods returns after missing all of 2018 with a knee injury to add further depth to a pretty experienced group.

Up front, Osa Odighizuwa and Atonio Mafi anchor a defensive line that simply has to get more push upfield but has enough size to pose a problem for opponents.

SPECIALISTS Tight ends coach Derek Sage adds special teams to his responsibilities this year and has his work cut out for him after plenty of poor outings hampered efforts a season ago. JJ Molson is a reliable placekicker, but the Bruins need to find a new punter while also shoring up the (often disastrous) return and coverage units.

FINAL ANALYSIS Scratching out six or seven wins to return UCLA to a bowl game is a realistic aim as Kelly continues to overhaul the roster and program at large. Competing in the Pac-12 South will require progress on defense with the talent on hand finally matching production, while seeing further gains on offense behind the backfield of Thompson-Robinson and Kelley.

Improvement may not come as quickly as initially expected, but the Bruins can build on some of their momentum from last season to use the 2019 campaign as a building block for greater things going forward.

DEPTH CHART

Ucla

OFFENSE (8)

WR	**14**	**Theo Howard (Sr.)**	9	Dymond Lee (Jr.)
WR	23	Chase Cota (So.)	21	Michael Ezeike (So.)
WR	**10**	**Demetric Felton (Jr.)**	2	Kyle Philips (So.)
LT	70	Alec Anderson (Fr.)	78	Lucas Gramlick (Fr.)
LG	**55**	**Michael Alves (Jr.)**	57	Jon Gaines (Fr.)
C	**75**	**Boss Tagaloa (Sr.)**	64	Sam Marrazzo (So.)
RG	**76**	**Christaphany Murray (So.)**		Duke Clemens (Fr.)
RG		Sean Rhyan (Fr.)	**73**	**Jake Burton (Jr.)**
TE	86	Devin Asiasi (Jr.)	87	Jordan Wilson (Jr.)
QB	**1**	**Dorian Thompson-Robinson (So.)**	12	Austin Burton (So.)
RB	**27**	**Joshua Kelley (Sr.)**	26	Martell Irby (So.

DEFENSE (9)

Returning Starters in Bold

DE	**92**	**Osa Odighizuwa (Jr.)**	55	Steven Mason (So.)
DT	**56**	**Atonio Mafi (So.)**	91	Otito Ogbonnia (So.)
DE	44	Martin Andrus (Jr.)	58	Datona Jackson (Jr.)
OLB	**11**	**Keisean Lucier-South (Sr.)**	33	Bo Calvert (So.)
ILB	19	Josh Woods (Sr.)	**25**	**Tyree Thompson (Sr.)**
ILB	**14**	**Krys Barnes (Sr.)**	52	Lokeni Toailoa (Sr.)
OLB	99	Elijah Wade (So.)	**97**	**Odua Isibor (So.)**
CB	**1**	**Darnay Holmes (Jr.)**	24	Jay Shaw (So.)
CB	**18**	**Elijah Gates (So.)**	27	Patrick Jolly (Fr.)
S	**37**	**Quentin Lake (Jr.)**	30	Elisha Guidry (So.)
S	4	Stephan Blaylock (So.)	7	Mo Osling III (Jr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	17	JJ Molson (Sr.)	**KR**	1	Darnay Holmes (Jr.)
P	49	Collin Flintoft (So.)	**PR**	2	Kyle Philips (So.)

2018 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Wilton Speight	208	126	1,527	6	6
D. Thompson-Robinson	**194**	**112**	**1,311**	**7**	**4**

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD
Joshua Kelly	**225**	**1,243**	**5.5**	**12**
Kazmeir Allen	**30**	**188**	**6.3**	**1**
Martell Irby	**45**	**187**	**4.2**	**1**
Bolu Olorunfunmi	31	85	2.7	4

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Caleb Wilson	60	965	16.1	4
Theo Howard	**51**	**677**	**13.3**	**4**
Joshua Kelley	**27**	**193**	**7.1**	**0**
Demetric Felton	**20**	**207**	**10.4**	**1**

KICKING: **JJ Molson, 14-19 FGs, 77 pts.**
TACKLES: Adarius Pickett, 123; **Krys Barnes, 85**
SACKS: **Keisean Lucier-South, 4.0**
INTERCEPTIONS: **Darnay Holmes, 3**

Returning Players in **Bold**

SCOUTING THE BRUINS

OPPOSING COACHES SIZE UP UCLA

"The most improved team from the start of last season to the end. A completely different team from the one who lost to Cincinnati. You're really watching it come together for Chip (Kelly) and those guys game by game, especially on offense. The guys who bought in and understood the offense were the ones playing in November, and they also looked like the more talented guys. That's usually how it works when you're changing over. … It doesn't look like it's going to be Chip Kelly Oregon. It's funny, he's still running a lot of base stuff that now almost everyone in the conference and the country runs, but he has such a thorough knowledge, really an architect's understanding, he has a way of making very small, very effective adjustments. And he likes to tinker anyway. It's scary how much command he has of that scheme. … Joshua Kelley at running back was a big surprise, although the kid looks like he's a natural. … They improved a lot on defense as the season went, but there are more issues there than on offense. They need a better pass rush. … From what we hear, the school has given him a lot of authority. Whatever he's asking for, they're giving it to him. Facilities, staff, that kind of stuff that UCLA didn't really understand the importance of. He's probably got more control there than he did at Oregon."

USC **Trojans**

National Forecast: **43** • Pac-12 South Prediction: **3** • Projected Record: **6-6, 4-5 Pac-12**

JT Daniels

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Clay Helton
Record at School: 32-17 (3+ years)
Career Record: 32-17 (3+ years)
Offensive Coordinator: Graham Harrell
Defensive Coordinator: Clancy Pendergast
Location: Los Angeles, CA
Stadium: United Airlines Memorial Coliseum (77,500)

KEY TROJANS

MICHAEL PITTMAN JR., WR The 6'4" target was a bright spot and emerged as the most reliable deep threat.

CHRISTIAN RECTOR, DE Disruptive edge rusher, with his 4.5 sacks coming in the final six games last season.

JAY TUFELE, DT The 310-pound tackle showed the potential to be the anchor of the defensive line, and the athleticism to be a disruptive playmaker.

KEY LOSSES

CAMERON SMITH, LB The first player in four decades to lead USC in tackles in three consecutive seasons.

PORTER GUSTIN, LB Missed half the season because of an ankle fracture, but he was the team's most disruptive pass rusher when healthy.

IMAN MARSHALL, CB Had his best season as a senior; he allowed only 21 receptions, according to data from *Pro Football Focus*.

RISING STAR

Defensive back **CHASE WILLIAMS** took advantage of the NCAA's new redshirt rule in 2018, appearing in four games but preserving a season of eligibility. He started against Notre Dame as a safety, totaling four tackles, and he is the leading candidate to start at nickel corner this fall.

USC enjoyed its best stretch since the Pete Carroll era during its first two seasons under Clay Helton, winning a Rose Bowl and a Pac-12 championship.

Then the bottom fell out. After the losses of significant playmakers on offense, including star quarterback Sam Darnold, the Trojans went 5–7 in 2018, their first losing season since 2000. Unlike the program's last coach to oversee a sub-.500 finish (Paul Hackett), Helton was retained, but he faces significant pressure from an impatient fan base to lead USC back into contention for a conference championship, if not the College Football Playoff.

Reasons for optimism remain, most notably the arrival of Graham Harrell as offensive coordinator. Harrell, formerly at North Texas, is a Mike Leach disciple who will install his version of the Air Raid. The scheme could serve as a jolt for a roster with no shortage of skill position talent and highly recruited quarterbacks. Helton needs a quick fix to cool his hot seat.

OFFENSE For 11 games last season, the Trojans started a true freshman at quarterback in JT Daniels. It was in the final game that Helton saw a vision for his revamped offense. As the Trojans challenged playoff-bound Notre Dame, Daniels completed 26-of-31 passes by halftime, looking most comfortable in the quick passing game.

"I wanted to bring a great passing-game mind in to continue that," Helton says.

He first hired Kliff Kingsbury as offensive coordinator before the hotshot play caller took a head coaching job in the NFL a month later, prompting Helton to bring in Harrell. Kingsbury and Harrell possess similar pedigrees — former quarterbacks under Leach at Texas Tech and adopters of variations of the Air Raid.

The creative passing system could benefit Daniels, though he first needs to hold off Jack Sears, a sophomore who proved capable when he started a game in place of Daniels due to injury. Daniels, who skipped his senior season of high school, had ups and downs in his debut season but finished with similar statistics to Matt Barkley, the only other true freshman to start a season (2009) at quarterback for the Trojans.

Either quarterback will have an array of skill players who would be coveted by most programs, including a trio of wide receivers that includes Amon-Ra St. Brown, Michael Pittman Jr. and Tyler Vaughns. Running backs Vavae Malepeai and Stephen Carr are able pass catchers as well.

"The talent's there," Harrell says. "Just got to get them excited about what we're doing and put those guys in position to be successful."

An X-factor: USC's ability to fix the offensive line. The Trojans allowed 27 sacks in 2018 and ranked 107th in the nation in rushing offense.

DEFENSE Clancy Pendergast has been the defensive coordinator in each season under Helton. This time, he hopes to install a more simplified scheme. The approach could benefit a group that will be much younger after

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	Fresno State
Sept.	7	Stanford
Sept.	14	at BYU
Sept.	20	Utah
Sept.	28	at Washington
Oct.	12	at Notre Dame
Oct.	19	Arizona
Oct.	25	at Colorado
Nov.	2	Oregon
Nov.	9	at Arizona State
Nov.	16	at California
Nov.	23	UCLA

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 5-7, 4-5 PAC-12

Sept.	1	UNLV	W	43-21
Sept.	8	at Stanford	L	3-17
Sept.	15	at Texas	L	14-37
Sept.	21	Washington State	W	39-36
Sept.	29	at Arizona	W	24-20
Oct.	13	Colorado	W	31-20
Oct.	20	at Utah	L	28-41
Oct.	27	Arizona State	L	35-38
Nov.	3	at Oregon State	W	38-21
Nov.	10	California	L	14-15
Nov.	17	at UCLA	L	27-34
Nov.	24	Notre Dame	L	17-24

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	PAC-12	NATIONAL
Scoring	26.1 ppg	9	91
Rushing	133.5 ypg	10	107
Passing	249.1 ypg	6	48
Total	382.6 ypg	10	84
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**PAC-12**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	27.0 ppg	8	64
Rushing	164.8 ypg	9	67
Passing	223.3 ypg	5	61
Total	388.0 ypg	7	60
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**PAC-12**	**NATIONAL**
-10	-0.83	11	120

2019 RECRUITS

1. Kyle Ford, WR, Corona, CA
2. Drake Jackson, DE, Corona, CA
3. Max Williams, CB, Carson, CA
4. Maninoa Tufono, LB, Honolulu, HI
5. Jude Wolfe, TE, Laguna Hills, CA
6. Drake London, WR, Moorpark, CA
7. Jason Rodriguez, OT, Hesperia, CA
8. Briton Allen, S, Orlando, FL
9. Kenan Christon, RB, San Diego, CA
10. Ralen Goforth, LB, Long Beach, CA
11. Ethan Rae, TE, Anaheim Hills, CA
12. Nick Figueroa, DE, San Bernardino, CA*
13. Adonis Otey, CB, Columbia, TN
14. Munir McClain, WR, San Juan Capistrano, CA
15. Kedon Slovis, QB, Scottsdale, AZ
16. Tuasivi Nomura, DB, Corona, CA
17. Stanley Ta'ufo'ou, LB, Simi Valley, CA
18. Dejon Benton, DT, Oakland, CA
19. Jaylen Watson, CB, Augusta, GA*
20. Jayden Williams, S, Laton, CA
21. Trey Davis, CB, Federal Way, WA
22. Kaulana Makaula, S, Kailua, HI
23. Gino Quinones, DE, Ewa Beach, HI
24. Tilini Livai, OG, Torrance, CA
25. Dorian Hewett, S, Houston, TX
26. Ben Griffiths, P, Melbourne, AU

*junior college transfer

Recruits ranked according to the 247SportsComposite

Peter Brouillet

ADVANCED STATS

5 Factors: College Football's Most Important Stats

Field Position[1]		Rank
Offense	28.7	100
Defense	29.5	69
Margin	-0.8	87

Efficiency[2]		Rank
Offense	42.0%	71
Defense	38.1%	29
Margin	+3.9%	43

Explosiveness[3]		Rank
Offense	5.8	63
Defense	5.4	47
Margin	0.4	54

Finishing Drives[4]		Rank
Offense	4.2	101
Defense	4.7	88
Margin	-0.5	105

Adjusted TO Margin[5]		Rank
Projected	-6.4	118
Actual	-10	120
Margin	-3.6	101

KEY: **1**-Average starting field position by yard line; **2**-Rate of successful plays (gaining 50% of necessary yards on 1st down, 70% on 2nd down, 100% on 3rd down); **3**-Explosiveness=yards per play; **4**-Points per trip inside 40-yard line; **5**-TO margin accounting for "luck" • Advanced stats provided by Bill Connelly of SB Nation

NUMBERS TO KNOW

38.1

USC's defense allowed a 38.1 percent success rate (percentage of plays that gained at least 50 percent of necessary yardage on first down, 70 percent on second, or 100 percent on third or fourth), 29th in FBS and third in the Pac-12. Decent.

3.5

Big plays, however, were a bit of an issue. The Trojans allowed 3.5 passes per game of 20-plus yards (87th in FBS) and 2.1 gains per game of 30-plus (65th).

26.1

USC averaged just 26.1 points per game in 2018, its first time under 29 per game since 2009. Both 2009 and 2018 featured freshman quarterbacks running the offense, and in both 2010 and 2019, new offensive coordinators came aboard. The 2010 offense improved to 31 points per game. 2019?

losing its veteran linebackers, plus the bulk of its experience in the secondary.

The area of strength is along the defensive line, where Pendergast says he could use more down linemen to take advantage of the surplus of bodies, led by Jay Tufele, Marlon Tuipulotu and Brandon Pili, all previous members of the 2017 recruiting class. They join edge Christian Rector.

When Pendergast's defenses have been most successful, they've been able to pressure quarterbacks. The Trojans tied for the national lead with Clemson with 46 sacks in 2017 but slipped last season to 29 sacks, ranking 49th.

Palaie Gaoteote IV is a promising linebacker, a punishing 250-pound presence who covers a lot of ground. Gaoteote gained starting experience when Cameron Smith was out with a hamstring injury. He'll be in the middle of the defense with John Houston Jr., second on the team in tackles.

The secondary remains a concern; half of the scholarship defensive backs are incoming freshmen. Greg Johnson is the only cornerback on the roster with starting experience. Depth already looked like an issue in spring practice when the Trojans at times used walk-ons on the second-team defense.

One known commodity is rangy safety Talanoa Hufanga, fifth on the team in tackles as a freshman despite starting only five games and missing the final month with a broken collarbone.

SPECIALISTS The special teams will have a punter with little experience and a placekicker returning from knee surgery. Ben Griffiths, a 27-year-old freshman, previously played Australian rules football for eight seasons, and Chase McGrath suffered a torn ACL last September. If McGrath does not recover in time for the season opener, the Trojans will rely on Michael Brown.

FINAL ANALYSIS The Trojans should field a more competitive team in 2019. Then again, their schedule makes for a hard hill to climb. Oregon and Washington, the favorites in the North Division, return to the slate, and the nonconference games include road trips to BYU and Notre Dame. But no team in the Pac-12 is unassailable, and if USC can successfully regroup by fixing an offense that was at its least productive since 2001, then it can be a viable contender in the conference race.

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (5)

WR	6	**Michael Pittman Jr. (Sr.)**	2	Devon Williams (So.)
WR	8	Amon-Ra St. Brown (So.)		Kyle Ford (Fr.)
WR	21	**Tyler Vaughns (Jr.)**		Drake London (Fr.)
LT	73	**Austin Jackson (Jr.)**	76	Clayton Bradley (Sr.)
LG	75	Alijah Vera-Tucker (So.)	52	Jacob Daniel (Sr.)
C	62	Brett Neilon (So.)	57	Justin Dedich (Fr.)
RG	72	**Andrew Vorhees (Jr.)**	68	Liam Douglass (Fr.)
RT	70	Jalen McKenzie (So.)	51	Bernard Schirmer (Jr.)
TE	83	Josh Falo (Jr.)	84	Erik Krommenhoek (Jr.)
QB	18	**JT Daniels (So.)**	10	Jack Sears (So.)
RB	29	Vavae Malepeai (Jr.)	7	Stephen Carr (Jr.)

DEFENSE (4)

Returning Starters in Bold

DE	89	**Christian Rector (Sr.)**	90	Connor Murphy (Jr.)
DT	78	Jay Tufele (So.)	97	Jacob Lichtenstein (So.)
DT	51	**Marlon Tuipulotu (So.)**	91	Brandon Pili (Jr.)
OLB	56	**Jordan Iosefa (Sr.)**	26	Kana'i Mauga (So.)
ILB	1	Palaie Gaoteote IV (So.)	58	Solomon Tuliaupupu (Fr.)
ILB	10	**John Houston Jr. (Sr.)**	18	Raymond Scott (So.)
CB	4	Olaijah Griffin (So.)		Jaylen Watson (Fr.)
CB	9	Greg Johnson (So.)	6	Isaac Taylor-Stuart (Fr.)
NB	17	Chase Williams (Fr.)	16	Dominic Davis (Sr.)
S	15	Talanoa Hufanga (So.)	25	Briton Allen (Fr.)
S	21	Isaiah Pola-Mao (So.)	28	C.J. Pollard (Jr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	40	Chase McGrath (So.)	KR	7	Stephen Carr (Jr.)
P	24	Ben Griffiths (Fr.)	PR	8	Amon-Ra St. Brown (So.)

2018 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
JT Daniels	**363**	**216**	**2,672**	**14**	**10**
Jack Sears	**28**	**20**	**235**	**2**	**0**
Matt Fink	9	7	46	1	0

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD
Aca'Cedric Ware	125	825	6.6	6
Vavae Malepeai	**93**	**501**	**5.4**	**8**
Stephen Carr	**81**	**384**	**4.7**	**2**

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Amon-Ra St. Brown	**60**	**750**	**12.5**	**3**
Tyler Vaughns	**58**	**674**	**11.6**	**6**
Michael Pittman Jr.	**41**	**758**	**18.5**	**6**
Velus Jones Jr.	**24**	**266**	**11.1**	**1**

KICKING: **Michael Brown, 7-9 FGs, 53 pts.; Chase McGrath, 6-8 FGs, 24 pts.**

TACKLES: Cameron Smith, 81, **John Houston Jr., 67**

SACKS: Porter Gustin, 7.0

INTERCEPTIONS: 4 players tied with 1

Returning Players in **Bold**

SCOUTING THE TROJANS

OPPOSING COACHES SIZE UP USC

"Everyone will be watching to see if they can turn this thing around. They have to get it done this season or Clay Helton is gone. A lot of us thought their administration would make a change last year, but USC is a different place. A lot of their decision-making isn't like most places. … Losing Kliff Kingsbury is understandable — the guy got a head job in the NFL — but it's still not a good situation. Graham Harrell will have some really talented guys to work with. They won't be drastically different; they've played in the gun for a while now. It won't look as extremely different as we're hearing in the offseason. It might be an improvement over last year. Of all the things around that program, their inability to run the ball is their biggest problem. They just don't look like the USC you expect. Mike Jinks was a great running backs coach in an Air Raid at Texas Tech. So yeah, the hires say they're going all-in on the Air Raid. It might look strange, but they're heading that way. … They have to count on two things happening — JT Daniels getting comfortable in that system right away, and the defense cleaning up. … The defensive front is more or less the same, but they aren't those scary NFL guys we used to see come out there. They don't worry you anymore."

Utah **Utes**

National Forecast: **13** • Pac-12 South Prediction: **1** • Projected Record: **10-3, 7-2 Pac-12**

Tyler Huntley

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Kyle Whittingham
Record at School: 120-61 (14+ years)
Career Record: 120-61 (14+ years)
Offensive Coordinator: Andy Ludwig
Defensive Coordinator: Morgan Scalley
Location: Salt Lake City, UT
Stadium: Rice-Eccles Stadium (45,807)

KEY UTES

JAYLON JOHNSON, CB Returned an interception 100 yards for a TD at Stanford and made a key fourth-down deflection vs. Oregon.

LEKI FOTU, DT Another in Utah's series of athletic defensive linemen; received a favorable NFL evaluation but chose to stay in school.

ZACK MOSS, RB Was just hitting his stride when a knee injury ended his season early, and he's intending to become Utah's first 1,000-yard rusher in three straight seasons.

KEY LOSSES

MATT GAY, K Made 56-of-65 field goals in two seasons, including 6-of-6 in a win over Oregon.

CODY BARTON, LB Labeled a "self-made guy" by Kyle Whittingham; overtook Chase Hansen for team lead in tackles in the final game.

MARQUISE BLAIR, S Filled a critical role, roaming the field and functioning as an extra linebacker at times and also covering deep.

RISING STAR

Sophomore receiver **BRYAN THOMPSON** appeared in four games late in the season after recovering from an injury, while preserving a year's eligibility. He made a 31-yard reception in the Holiday Bowl vs. Northwestern and was among Utah's top receivers in spring scrimmages.

For the first time, Utah enters a season as defending Pac-12 South champion with genuine Rose Bowl possibilities. This is new territory for a program that prides itself on exceeding expectations.

Coach Kyle Whittingham views his team the same way as ever. "It's nice to be recognized as a team that's doing some good things, but I don't think there's any chance of this team becoming overconfident or losing that underdog mentality," Whittingham says.

The favorable impressions of the Utes stem from their returning personnel. Utah had only nine senior starters (counting two kickers) in 2018 and brings back nearly every offensive player who touched the football.

The Utes sent six players to the NFL Scouting Combine. But four key players, including running back Zack Moss, chose to stay in school for their senior seasons.

If the offensive line comes together, the Utes expect to be consistently productive in coordinator Andy Ludwig's return to the program after a 10-year absence. The defense appears solid on all levels.

OFFENSE Quarterback Tyler Huntley missed the last five games of 2018 with a broken collarbone. He had led Utah to a 4–0 October that included a win at Stanford and convincing defeats of USC and UCLA. Huntley looked good in the spring and regained his job over Jason Shelley, who had won his first three starts before losing to Washington in the Pac-12 Championship Game and to Northwestern in the Holiday Bowl.

Ludwig intends to maximize Huntley's running ability, in addition to using more rollout passing. "I have not coached a quarterback with that skill set, that athleticism, in my career," Ludwig says.

Moss will be the centerpiece of Utah's offense. He also missed those final five games last season, due to a knee injury. Moss had gained 1,096 yards in nine games and is a dynamic, punishing runner who wants a big workload. Devonta'e Henry-Cole emerged as the No. 2 back in spring practice, with Moss rehabilitating.

Britain Covey caught 60 passes as a sophomore before injuring his knee in the conference title game and missing spring practice. Covey is more than halfway to Utah's career receptions record and should be featured as both a receiver and a runner in Ludwig's scheme, which also will make good use of sophomore tight ends Cole Fotheringham and Brant Kuithe. Sophomore Solomon Enis played well in the spring.

Utah's line is led by tackle Darrin Paulo. Orlando Umana, Nick Ford and Braeden Daniels are solid players, with an opening for junior college transfer Bamidele Olaseni to step in at tackle if he completes his academic requirements.

DEFENSE Utah's coaches were thrilled when defensive linemen Leki Fotu and Bradlee Anae chose to stay in school. As always, the front four will anchor a Ute defense that ranked No. 1 in the Pac-12 against the run and No. 2 overall last season.

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	29	at BYU
Sept.	7	Northern Illinois
Sept.	14	Idaho State
Sept.	20	at USC
Sept.	28	Washington State
Oct.	12	at Oregon State
Oct.	19	Arizona State
Oct.	26	California
Nov.	2	at Washington
Nov.	16	UCLA
Nov.	23	at Arizona
Nov.	30	Colorado

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 9-5, 6-3 PAC-12

Aug.	30	Weber State	W	41-10
Sept.	8	at Northern Illinois	W	17-6
Sept.	15	Washington	L	7-21
Sept.	29	at Washington State	L	24-28
Oct.	6	at Stanford	W	40-21
Oct.	12	Arizona	W	42-10
Oct.	20	USC	W	41-28
Oct.	26	at UCLA	W	41-10
Nov.	3	at Arizona State	L	20-38
Nov.	10	Oregon	W	32-25
Nov.	17	at Colorado	W	30-7
Nov.	24	BYU	W	35-27
Nov.	30	vs. Washington #	L	3-10
Dec.	31	vs. Northwestern %	L	20-31

#Santa Clara %Holiday Bowl

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	PAC-12	NATIONAL
Scoring	28.1 ppg	6	75
Rushing	180.0 ypg	3	53
Passing	215.8 ypg	11	79
Total	395.8 ypg	7	72
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**PAC-12**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	19.4 ppg	2	16
Rushing	100.3 ypg	1	5
Passing	215.3 ypg	3	53
Total	315.6 ypg	2	14
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**PAC-12**	**NATIONAL**
-5	-0.36	10	100

2019 RECRUITS

1. Bamidele Olaseni, OT, London, England*
2. Sataoa Laumea, OG, Rialto, CA
3. Jordan Wilmore, RB, Inglewood, CA
4. Marist Talavou, OG, Norwalk, CA
5. Simote Pepa, DT, South Jordan, UT
6. Donte Banton, WR, Lauderhill, FL
7. LaCarea Pleasant-Johnson, CB, Phoenix, AZ
8. JaTravis McCloud, CB, Tulsa, OK
9. Micah Bernard, RB, Long Beach, CA
10. Sione Vaki, S, Antioch, CA
11. Junior Tafuna, LB, Taylorsville, UT
12. Johnny Maea, OL, Salt Lake City, UT
13. Semisi Lauaki, DL, Hawthorne, CA
14. Aaron Lowe, S, Mesquite, TX
15. Luke Felix-Fualalo, OT, Brisbane, AU
16. Falcon Kaumatule, OL, Las Vegas, NV
17. Keaton Bills, DL, Draper, UT
18. Drew Rawls, CB, Beaumont, TX
19. Charlie Vincent, ATH, Salt Lake City, UT
20. Ben Lennon, P, Viewbank, AU

*junior college transfer

Recruits ranked according to the 247SportsComposite

Peter Brouillet

ADVANCED STATS

5 Factors: College Football's Most Important Stats

Field Position[1]		Rank
Offense	30.3	51
Defense	29.6	74
Margin	**+0.7**	**62**

Efficiency[2]		Rank
Offense	44.0%	40
Defense	35.9%	16
Margin	**+8.1%**	**15**

Explosiveness[3]		Rank
Offense	5.7	66
Defense	4.6	10
Margin	**+1.1**	**20**

Finishing Drives[4]		Rank
Offense	4.7	64
Defense	3.8	15
Margin	**+0.9**	**21**

Adjusted TO Margin[5]		Rank
Projected	-0.6	77
Actual	-5	100
Margin	**-4.4**	**108**

KEY: 1-Average starting field position by yard line; **2**-Rate of successful plays (gaining 50% of necessary yards on 1st down, 70% on 2nd down, 100% on 3rd down); **3**-Explosiveness=yards per play; **4**-Points per trip inside 40-yard line; **5**-TO margin accounting for "luck" • Advanced stats provided by Bill Connelly of SB Nation

NUMBERS TO KNOW

28

Attacking the run: Utah stuffed runners at or behind the line on 28 percent of opponents' non-sack carries, second in FBS and first in the Pac-12. That keyed the most efficient defense in the conference.

+8.1

The Utes' offensive success rate (percentage of plays that gained at least 50 percent of necessary yardage on first down, 70 percent on second, or 100 percent on third or fourth) was 44 percent, and their defense allowed 35.9 percent. The plus-8.1 percent margin was best in the conference and 15th nationally.

1.9

Efficiency was key, because the Utah offense wasn't generating tons of big plays and easy points: The Utes averaged just 1.9 gains per game of 30-plus yards, 90th in FBS.

Whittingham says Utah's defensive line includes "three NFL guys, at least." John Penisini was highly consistent at tackle in his first extended action last season.

The linebackers are a question mark, with Cody Barton and Chase Hansen having departed as possibly the best tandem in school history. Manny Bowen, a graduate transfer from Penn State, and Francis Bernard should fill those spots adequately in a scheme that uses two linebackers. Bernard was sidelined during the spring, when Devin Lloyd was Utah's most improved defensive player, according to coordinator Morgan Scalley.

The secondary lost both safeties, so Julian Blackmon moved from cornerback to safety. Jaylon Johnson is an NFL prospect as a junior cornerback, and the rest of the secondary looks capable. Utah's basic scheme uses five defensive backs, and slot corner Javelin Guidry is one of the fastest players in college football.

Scalley's biggest emphasis is takeaways. Last season, the Utes intercepted 15 passes but recovered only six fumbles in 14 games.

SPECIALISTS Punter Mitch Wishnowsky and kicker Matt Gay completed their careers as national award winners and major weapons for the Utes. Whittingham recruited another Australian punter, Ben Lennon, as Wishnowsky's replacement. Chayden Johnston was named Utah's No. 1 kicker after spring practice, but he announced five days later that he was giving up football. Johnston's move promotes freshman walk-on Jadon Redding to the top position on Utah's depth chart, after an inconsistent performance in the spring. Covey, who played about half of last season with a broken bone in his wrist, is the primary returner. Being healthy should help him be more aggressive in fielding punts.

FINAL ANALYSIS Even before the Utes completed their first Pac-12 South title season, 2019 was coming into focus with returning players in key positions and a favorable schedule that does not include Stanford and Oregon. UCLA is the only South Division team to play in the league title game in consecutive seasons, and the Utes believe they're well positioned to match the feat. The Pac-12 opener, Sept. 20 at USC, will be a good gauge of the Utes' credentials as defending champions.

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (8)

WR	19	Bryan Thompson (So.)	25	Jaylen Dixon (So.)
WR	7	**Demari Simpkins (Sr.)**	21	Solomon Enis (So.)
WR	18	**Britain Covey (Jr.)**	45	Samson Nacua (Jr.)
LT	77	**Darrin Paulo (Sr.)**	72	Luke Felix-Fualalo (Fr.)
LG	65	Paul Toala (Sr.)	66	Kyle Lanterman (Sr.)
C	50	**Orlando Umana (Jr.)**	90	Paul Maile (Fr.)
RG	71	Braeden Daniels (Fr.)	53	Johnny Maea (Fr.)
RT	55	**Nick Ford (So.)**	58	Simi Moala (Fr.)
TE	89	**Cole Fotheringham (So.)**	80	Brant Kuithe (So.)
QB	1	**Tyler Huntley (Sr.)**	15	Jason Shelley (So.)
RB	2	**Zack Moss (Sr.)**	7	Devonta'e Henry-Cole (Jr.)

DEFENSE (7)

Returning Starters in Bold

DE	6	**Bradlee Anae (Sr.)**	93	Semisi Lauaki (Fr.)
DT	52	**John Penisini (Sr.)**	41	Hauati Pututau (Jr.)
DT	99	**Leki Fotu (Sr.)**	98	Viane Moala (Jr.)
DE	42	Mika Tafua (So.)	92	**Maxs Tupai (Jr.)**
LB	13	Francis Bernard (Sr.)	20	Devin Lloyd (So.)
LB	43	Manny Bowen (Sr.)	24	Sione Lund (So.)
CB	1	**Jaylon Johnson (Jr.)**	9	Bronson Boyd (So.)
CB	5	Tareke Lewis (Sr.)	14	Josh Nurse (Sr.)
NB	28	**Javelin Guidry (Jr.)**	11	Malone Mataele (Fr.)
FS	23	**Julian Blackmon (Sr.)**	10	R.J. Hubert (So.)
SS	26	Terrell Burgess (Sr.)	19	Vonte Davis (Jr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	97	Jadon Redding (Fr.)	KR	18	Britain Covey (Jr.)
P	33	Ben Lennon (Fr.)	PR	18	Britain Covey (Jr.)

2018 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Tyler Huntley	234	150	1,788	12	6
Jason Shelley	168	98	1,162	5	6

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD
Zack Moss	179	1,096	6.1	11
Armand Shyne	120	512	4.3	5
Tyler Huntley	108	304	2.8	4
Jason Shelley	63	192	3.0	3

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Britain Covey	60	637	10.6	1
Jaylen Dixon	32	589	18.4	2
Samson Nacua	31	362	11.7	5
Demari Simpkins	26	297	11.4	2

KICKING: Matt Gay, 26-31 FGs, 123 pts.

TACKLES: Cody Barton, 116; Chase Hansen, 114

SACKS: **Bradlee Anae, 8.0**

INTERCEPTIONS: **Jaylon Johnson, 4**

Returning Players in **Bold**

SCOUTING THE UTES

OPPOSING COACHES SIZE UP UTAH

"The most physical and demanding team in that division (Pac-12 South). They came together really well last season and really punished a lot of teams who weren't ready to get nasty. They always have a great defense; they probably always will with Kyle (Whittingham), but now they have a really athletic quarterback who can expand what we've seen from them the last few years. … They're the most physical football team in the league, neck and neck with Stanford. … You get the impression that they want to lean on that defensive physicality with the run game and make that the standard, so it was sort of a strange mix to see how the old offensive coordinator (Troy Taylor) would game plan. There's familiarity with Andy Ludwig, so that makes a ton of sense, and he was in a similar situation at Vanderbilt trying to fit an offense around a defense. … I think they'll slow it down even more on offense. Old-school stuff. Tyler Huntley is a great threat with his legs, but I think they'll limit his exposure there, because they're nowhere near as dynamic when he's injured. … The offensive line loses some guys, and they graduated some linebackers, but neither one of those areas would really bother you, they're good at developing depth for both of those. … They always have good special teams too, really good at setting field position."

SEC Preview

East	Predicted Order of Finish	West
1	*Georgia* **BULLDOGS** 12-1, 8-0 SEC	1 *Alabama* **CRIMSON TIDE** 13-0, 8-0 SEC
2	*Florida* **GATORS** 10-2, 6-2 SEC	2 *LSU* **TIGERS** 10-2, 6-2 SEC
3	*Missouri* **TIGERS** 8-4, 4-4 SEC	3 *Texas A&M* **AGGIES** 8-4, 5-3 SEC
4	*South Carolina* **GAMECOCKS** 6-6, 3-5 SEC	4 *Auburn* **TIGERS** 7-5, 3-5 SEC
5	*Tennessee* **VOLUNTEERS** 7-5, 3-5 SEC	5 *Mississippi State* **BULLDOGS** 7-5, 3-5 SEC
6	*Kentucky* **WILDCATS** 6-6, 2-6 SEC	6 *Ole Miss* **REBELS** 5-7, 2-6 SEC
7	*Vanderbilt* **COMMODORES** 5-7, 2-6 SEC	7 *Arkansas* **RAZORBACKS** 5-7, 1-7 SEC

SEC Championship: **Alabama over Georgia**

Games to Watch

SEPT. 7
LSU AT TEXAS
Both schools pursued Tom Herman following the 2017 season. Herman chose Texas — adding a little spice to this already intriguing showdown.

SEPT. 7
TEXAS A&M AT CLEMSON
SEC fans might never shut up if the Aggies can find a way to knock off Trevor Lawrence and the defending national champs in Death Valley.

SEPT. 21
TENNESSEE AT FLORIDA
Jeremy Pruitt needs to show progress in Year 2 in Knoxville. A win at Florida in Week 4 would be a sign things are headed in the right direction.

SEPT. 21
NOTRE DAME AT GEORGIA
Georgia will be the sixth SEC venue Notre Dame has visited, joining Alabama, LSU, Ole Miss, Tennessee and Vanderbilt.

OCT. 12
ALABAMA AT TEXAS A&M
Alabama handled Texas A&M with relative ease in Jimbo Fisher's first season with the Aggies. This year's game should be more competitive.

NOV. 2
GEORGIA VS. FLORIDA
This could emerge as the Game of the Year in the SEC as these two programs are poised to dominate the East Division over the next decade.

2019 Unit Rankings

	QB	RB	WR/TE	OL	DL	LB	DB
ALABAMA	1	1	1	2	2	1	3
ARKANSAS	13	8	11	14	10	10	13
AUBURN	9	5	7	4	1	9	5
FLORIDA	4	3	2	10	3	5	2
GEORGIA	2	2	9	1	6	2	4
KENTUCKY	12	13	12	6	11	8	14
LSU	7	6	4	5	5	3	1
MISSOURI	6	7	5	3	9	6	10
MISS. STATE	10	11	13	7	8	4	7
OLE MISS	11	9	14	12	12	13	12
SOUTH CAROLINA	5	14	10	9	7	11	8
TENNESSEE	8	10	8	13	13	7	6
TEXAS A&M	3	12	3	8	4	12	9
VANDERBILT	14	4	6	11	14	14	11

2019 Bowl Projections

Peach Bowl (CFP): Alabama vs. Michigan

Fiesta Bowl (CFP): Georgia vs. Clemson

Sugar Bowl: LSU vs. Oklahoma

Orange Bowl: Florida vs. Syracuse

Citrus Bowl: Texas A&M vs. Nebraska

Outback Bowl: Auburn vs. Penn State

Texas Bowl: Mississippi State vs. Oklahoma State

TaxSlayer Bowl: South Carolina vs. Wisconsin

Belk Bowl: Tennessee vs. Virginia Tech

Music City Bowl: Kentucky vs. Miami (Fla.)

Recruiting by School

1. Alabama
2. Georgia
3. Texas A&M
4. LSU
5. Florida
6. Auburn
7. Tennessee
8. South Carolina
9. Ole Miss
10. Arkansas
11. Mississippi State
12. Kentucky
13. Missouri
14. Vanderbilt

Rich Rodriguez, Ole Miss

SEC Coordinator Carousel

Alabama: Offense
New: Steve Sarkisian
Old: Josh Gattis, Mike Locksley

Alabama: Defense
New: Pete Golding
Old: Pete Golding, Tosh Lupoi

Auburn: Offense
New: Kodi Burns, Kenny Dillingham
Old: Kodi Burns, Chip Lindsey

Auburn: Defense
New: Kevin Steele, Travis Williams
Old: Kevin Steele

Georgia: Offense
New: James Coley
Old: Jim Chaney, James Coley

Georgia: Defense
New: Dan Lanning, Glenn Schumann
Old: Mel Tucker

Kentucky: Defense
New: Brad White
Old: Matt House

Ole Miss: Offense
New: Rich Rodriguez
Old: Phil Longo

Ole Miss: Defense
New: Mike MacIntyre
Old: Jason Jones, Wesley McGriff

Mississippi State: Offense
New: Joe Moorhead
Old: Luke Getsy

Tennessee: Offense
New: Jim Chaney
Old: Tyson Helton

Tennessee: Defense
New: Derrick Ansley, Chris Rumph
Old: Chris Rumph, Kevin Sherrer

Vanderbilt: Offense
New: Gerry Gdowski
Old: Andy Ludwig

NOV. 9
LSU AT ALABAMA
It's still must-see TV, but LSU needs to break through against the Tide at some point. The Tigers have scored a total of 10 points in the last three meetings.

NOV. 16
GEORGIA AT AUBURN
Georgia has dominated this series over the last decade but is only 2–3 in its last five trips to Auburn, including a humbling 40–17 defeat in 2017.

NOV. 23
TEXAS A&M AT GEORGIA
Texas A&M joined the SEC in 2012, yet this will be the first time the Aggies and Bulldogs have played while in the same league.

NOV. 28
OLE MISS AT MISSISSIPPI STATE
It's not the best rivalry in college football, but it might be the most heated. These two teams — and especially the fans — simply do not like each other.

NOV. 30
ALABAMA AT AUBURN
The Crimson Tide restored order last year, snapping Auburn's one-game winning "streak" with a 52–21 win in Tuscaloosa.

NOV. 30
TEXAS A&M AT LSU
These teams played one of the most memorable games of the 2018 season — A&M's 74–72 win in seven OTs. LSU had won seven straight vs. the Aggies.

Rodriguez: AP

Tua Tagovailoa, Alabama

SEC Returning Leaders

Passing	ATT	COMP	PCT	YDS	TD	INT	AVG/G
Tua Tagovailoa, Alabama	355	245	69.0	3,966	43	6	264.4
Jake Bentley, South Carolina	388	240	61.9	3,171	27	14	264.3
Kellen Mond, Texas A&M	415	238	57.3	3,107	24	9	239.0

Rushing	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD	LONG	AVG/G
Ke'Shawn Vaughn, Vanderbilt	157	1,244	7.9	12	78	103.7
Larry Rountree III, Missouri	225	1,216	5.4	11	59	93.5
Scottie Phillips, Ole Miss	153	928	6.1	12	65	84.4

Receiving	REC	YDS	AVG	TD	LONG	AVG/G
Jerry Jeudy, Alabama	68	1,315	19.3	14	81	87.7
Kalija Lipscomb, Vanderbilt	87	916	10.5	9	68	70.5
Justin Jefferson, LSU	54	875	16.2	6	65	67.3

Tackles: De'Jon Harris, Arkansas (118), Cale Garrett, Missouri (112)
Sacks: Darrell Taylor, Tennessee (8.0), Nick Coe, Auburn (7.0)
Interceptions: Grant Delpit, LSU (5)

2018 SEC Standings

EAST	SEC	OVERALL	WEST	SEC	OVERALL
Georgia	7-1	11-3	Alabama	8-0	14-1
Florida	5-3	10-3	Texas A&M	5-3	9-4
Kentucky	5-3	10-3	LSU	5-3	10-3
South Carolina	4-4	7-6	Mississippi State	4-4	8-5
Missouri	4-4	8-5	Auburn	3-5	8-5
Vanderbilt	3-5	6-7	Ole Miss	1-7	5-7
Tennessee	2-6	5-7	Arkansas	0-8	2-10

2018 Bowl Results

Texas Bowl: Baylor 45, Vanderbilt 38
Music City Bowl: Auburn 63, Purdue 14
Liberty Bowl: Oklahoma State 38, Missouri 33
Belk Bowl: Virginia 28, South Carolina 0
Outback Bowl: Iowa 27, Mississippi State 22
Gator Bowl: Texas A&M 52, NC State 13
Citrus Bowl: Kentucky 27, Penn State 24
Peach Bowl: Florida 41, Michigan 15
Fiesta Bowl: LSU 40, UCF 32
Sugar Bowl: Texas 28, Georgia 21
Orange Bowl (CFP Semifinal): Alabama 45, Oklahoma 34
CFP National Championship Game: Clemson 44, Alabama 16

2018 SEC Team Stats & Rankings

Offense

	SCORING	RUSH	PASS	TOTAL
Alabama	45.6 (1)	198.4 (7)	323.6 (2)	522.0 (1)
Arkansas	21.7 (14)	143.4 (13)	192.3 (12)	335.7 (13)
Auburn	30.9 (8)	167.5 (10)	222.5 (9)	389.9 (11)
Florida	35.0 (5)	213.2 (4)	213.5 (10)	426.7 (6)
Georgia	37.9 (2)	238.8 (1)	226.1 (8)	464.9 (5)
Kentucky	26.6 (12)	199.4 (6)	161.5 (14)	360.8 (12)
LSU	32.4 (7)	173.6 (8)	228.5 (7)	402.1 (9)
Mississippi State	28.5 (11)	223.6 (2)	173.8 (13)	397.4 (10)
Missouri	36.6 (3)	202.4 (5)	279.4 (3)	481.8 (3)
Ole Miss	33.9 (6)	164.1 (11)	346.4 (1)	510.5 (2)
South Carolina	30.1 (9)	152.8 (12)	272.8 (4)	425.6 (7)
Tennessee	22.8 (13)	129.1 (14)	196.4 (11)	325.5 (14)
Texas A&M	36.0 (4)	219.0 (3)	252.6 (5)	471.6 (4)
Vanderbilt	28.5 (10)	167.5 (9)	243.7 (6)	411.2 (8)

Defense

	SCORING	RUSH	PASS	TOTAL
Alabama	18.1 (3)	121.3 (3)	198.3 (5)	319.5 (3)
Arkansas	34.8 (13)	167.8 (11)	245.3 (11)	413.2 (11)
Auburn	19.2 (4)	135.9 (6)	219.5 (7)	355.4 (8)
Florida	20.0 (6)	162.5 (10)	180.8 (3)	343.3 (6)
Georgia	19.2 (5)	134.0 (5)	180.3 (2)	314.3 (2)
Kentucky	16.8 (2)	151.6 (8)	186.3 (4)	337.9 (4)
LSU	21.8 (7)	138.6 (7)	200.1 (6)	338.7 (5)
Mississippi State	13.2 (1)	95.1 (1)	168.0 (1)	263.1 (1)
Missouri	25.5 (9)	126.5 (4)	262.0 (14)	388.5 (10)
Ole Miss	36.2 (14)	221.8 (14)	261.7 (13)	483.4 (14)
South Carolina	27.2 (11)	195.3 (13)	229.0 (9)	424.3 (12)
Tennessee	27.9 (12)	154.5 (9)	222.9 (8)	377.4 (9)
Texas A&M	25.3 (8)	95.2 (2)	253.2 (12)	348.4 (7)
Vanderbilt	26.6 (10)	194.7 (12)	244.2 (10)	438.9 (13)

Tua: Alabama Athletics; Swift, Henderson, Warrior: Athlon Sports; Rountree: Mizzou Athletics; Pinkney: Vanderbilt Athletics;

ALL-SEC TEAM

First-Team Offense

QB	**Tua Tagovailoa**	6-1	218	Jr.	Alabama
RB	**Najee Harris**	6-2	227	Jr.	Alabama
RB	**D'Andre Swift**	5-9	215	Jr.	Georgia
APB	**Ke'Shawn Vaughn**	5-10	215	Sr.	Vanderbilt
WR	**Jerry Jeudy**	6-1	192	Jr.	Alabama
WR	**Kalija Lipscomb**	6-1	200	Sr.	Vanderbilt
TE	**Albert Okwuegbunam**	6-5	255	Jr.	Missouri
C	**Drake Jackson**	6-2	313	Jr.	Kentucky
OL	**Prince Tega Wanogho**	6-7	307	Sr.	Auburn
OL	**Andrew Thomas**	6-5	320	Jr.	Georgia
OL	**Tre'Vour Wallace-Simms**	6-5	330	Sr.	Missouri
OL	**Jedrick Wills Jr.**	6-5	316	Jr.	Alabama

D'Andre Swift, Georgia

CJ Henderson, Florida

First-Team Defense

DL	**Derrick Brown**	6-5	325	Sr.	Auburn
DL	**Raekwon Davis**	6-7	309	Sr.	Alabama
DL	**Justin Madubuike**	6-3	304	Jr.	Texas A&M
DL	**Jabari Zuniga**	6-4	257	Sr.	Florida
LB	**Cale Garrett**	6-3	230	Sr.	Missouri
LB	**Dylan Moses**	6-3	235	Jr.	Alabama
LB	**Erroll Thompson**	6-1	250	Jr.	Mississippi State
CB	**Kristian Fulton**	6-0	192	Sr.	LSU
CB	**CJ Henderson**	6-1	191	Jr.	Florida
S	**Grant Delpit**	6-3	203	Jr.	LSU
S	**J.R. Reed**	6-1	194	Sr.	Georgia

First-Team Specialists

PK	**Rodrigo Blankenship**	6-1	191	Sr.	Georgia
P	**Braden Mann**	5-11	195	Sr.	Texas A&M
KR	**De'Vion Warren**	5-10	180	Jr.	Arkansas
PR	**Jaylen Waddle**	5-10	182	So.	Alabama

SECOND-TEAM OFFENSE

QB	**Jake Fromm**	6-2	220	Jr.	Georgia
RB	**Lamical Perine**	5-11	218	Sr.	Florida
RB	**Larry Rountree III**	5-10	210	Jr.	Missouri
APB	**Lynn Bowden Jr.**	6-1	199	Jr.	Kentucky
WR	**Bryan Edwards**	6-3	215	Sr.	South Carolina
WR	**Jaylen Waddle**	5-10	182	So.	Alabama
TE	**Jared Pinkney**	6-4	255	Sr.	Vanderbilt
C	**Lloyd Cushenberry III**	6-4	309	Jr.	LSU
OL	**Solomon Kindley**	6-4	335	Jr.	Georgia
OL	**Alex Leatherwood**	6-6	310	Jr.	Alabama
OL	**Damien Lewis**	6-3	322	Sr.	LSU
OL	**Logan Stenberg**	6-6	322	Sr.	Kentucky

SECOND-TEAM DEFENSE

DL	**McTelvin Agim**	6-3	279	Sr.	Arkansas
DL	**Nick Coe**	6-5	282	Jr.	Auburn
DL	**Javon Kinlaw**	6-6	302	Sr.	South Carolina
DL	**Rashard Lawrence**	6-3	317	Sr.	LSU
LB	**De'Jon Harris**	6-0	245	Sr.	Arkansas
LB	**Anfernee Jennings**	6-3	259	Sr.	Alabama
LB	**Jacob Phillips**	6-4	229	Jr.	LSU
CB	**Cameron Dantzler**	6-2	185	Jr.	Mississippi State
CB	**Patrick Surtain II**	6-2	203	So.	Alabama
S	**Xavier McKinney**	6-1	196	Jr.	Alabama
S	**Daniel Thomas**	5-11	208	Sr.	Auburn

SECOND-TEAM SPECIALISTS

PK	**Connor Limpert**	6-1	175	Sr.	Arkansas
P	**Arryn Siposs**	6-2	205	Jr.	Auburn
KR	**Jashaun Corbin**	6-0	207	So.	Texas A&M
PR	**Marquez Callaway**	6-2	199	Sr.	Tennessee

Larry Rountree III
Missouri

Jared Pinkney
Vanderbilt

Chauncey Rivers
Mississippi State

Nigel Warrior
Tennessee

THIRD-TEAM OFFENSE

QB	**Kellen Mond**	6-2	217	Jr.	Texas A&M
RB	**Kylin Hill**	5-11	215	Jr.	Mississippi State
RB	**Scottie Phillips**	5-8	211	Sr.	Ole Miss
APB	**Kadarius Toney**	5-11	190	Jr.	Florida
WR	**Quartney Davis**	6-2	200	Jr.	Texas A&M
WR	**Justin Jefferson**	6-2	185	Jr.	LSU
TE	**Cheyenne O'Grady**	6-4	251	Sr.	Arkansas
C	**Darryl Williams**	6-2	310	Sr.	Mississippi State
OL	**Marquel Harrell**	6-3	307	Sr.	Auburn
OL	**Dan Moore Jr.**	6-5	325	Jr.	Texas A&M
OL	**Isaiah Wilson**	6-7	340	So.	Georgia
OL	**Donell Stanley**	6-3	322	Sr.	South Carolina

THIRD-TEAM DEFENSE

DL	**Jordan Davis**	6-6	320	So.	Georgia
DL	**Jordan Elliott**	6-4	315	Jr.	Missouri
DL	**Chauncey Rivers**	6-3	275	Sr.	Mississippi State
DL	**D.J. Wonnum**	6-5	255	Sr.	South Carolina
LB	**Kash Daniel**	6-1	221	Sr.	Kentucky
LB	**David Reese II**	6-1	248	Sr.	Florida
LB	**Darrell Taylor**	6-4	255	Sr.	Tennessee
CB	**DeMarkus Acy**	6-2	195	Sr.	Missouri
CB	**Trevon Diggs**	6-2	200	Sr.	Alabama
S	**Kamren Curl**	6-2	201	Jr.	Arkansas
S	**Nigel Warrior**	6-0	191	Sr.	Tennessee

THIRD-TEAM SPECIALISTS

PK	**Evan McPherson**	5-11	177	So.	Florida
P	**Tommy Townsend**	6-2	183	Sr.	Florida
KR	**Noah Igbinoghene**	5-11	196	Jr.	Auburn
PR	**Lynn Bowden Jr.**	6-1	199	Jr.	Kentucky

Florida **Gators**

National Forecast: **8** • SEC East Prediction: **2** • Projected Record: **10-2, 6-2 SEC**

Lamical Perine

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Dan Mullen
Record at School: 10-3 (1 year)
Career Record: 79-49 (10 years)
Offensive Coordinators: Billy Gonzales, John Hevesy
Defensive Coordinator: Todd Grantham
Location: Gainesville, FL
Stadium: Ben Hill Griffin Stadium (88,548)

KEY GATORS

CJ HENDERSON, CB The junior has the speed, ball skills and instincts to be a first-team All-SEC performer and play his way into the top 15 of the 2020 NFL Draft.

LAMICAL PERINE, RB Led the Gators with 826 rushing yards and averaged 13.1 yards on 13 catches. He has 17 TDs the past two seasons.

JABARI ZUNIGA, DE Physical at the point of attack and fast off the edge, the 6'4", 257-pound Zuniga is the complete package.

KEY LOSSES

JACHAI POLITE, DE Polite posted 17.5 tackles for a loss, including 11 sacks. He also forced six fumbles.

JAWAAN TAYLOR, OT The 6'5", 328-pound Taylor was a physical force.

CHAUNCEY GARDNER-JOHNSON, DB Left for the NFL after posting 71 tackles, nine for a loss, and four interceptions. Also was Defensive MVP of the Peach Bowl.

RISING STAR

Linebacker **AMARI BURNEY**, a converted safety, can chase down ball carriers, run with receivers downfield and come off the edge to blitz the quarterback or cover the flats. Defensive coordinator Todd Grantham is sure to use Burney's versatility to keep offenses guessing.

Upon his return to Gainesville, Dan Mullen did not shy away from Gator Nation's lofty expectations. He actually may have raised them. Mullen's promise of another national championship likely has to wait, but the Gators' turnaround is ahead of schedule following a 10–3 finish, a six-win improvement over 2017.

The next step will not be easy, longtime Mullen lieutenant John Hevesy told his offensive linemen this spring.

"He said it's a lot easier to go from four wins to 10 wins than it is from 10 to 11," redshirt freshman guard Christopher Bleich says.

Most of the pieces are in place for another good season. But Mullen, who called plays for the 2006 and 2008 national champions, knows that good will eventually not be not good enough.

Mullen made that clear after last season's Georgia loss effectively cost Florida a shot at the SEC East.

"We're the Florida Gators," Mullen said last October. "That's what the standard is here, is greatness. That's what we want from these guys."

OFFENSE Mullen did not make Florida fans forget the days when he called plays for one of the best offenses in college football. He did offer hope, while enhancing his reputation as one of the game's top offensive minds.

The surprising development of embattled quarterback Feleipe Franks, daring play calls to beat Mississippi State and LSU, and season-ending blowouts of Florida State and Michigan laid a solid foundation.

Franks' continued evolution and the maturation of the offensive line will be key. A season after he threw nine touchdowns and eight interceptions, Franks tossed 24 scores and just six picks.

Franks will benefit from depth and talent at receiver Florida has not enjoyed in a decade. Senior Van Jefferson, jack-of-all trades Kadarius Toney and 6'5", 210-pound matchup nightmare Trevon Grimes anchor the group. Meanwhile, senior tailback Lamical Perine totaled 996 yards from scrimmage as a backup and is poised for a monster season.

First, though, the offensive line must replace four starters who made a combined 141 starts. Hevesy, who has been on the same coaching staff with Mullen since 2001 at Bowling Green, sets the tone. "He pushes us to 1000 percent," redshirt freshman Richard Gouraige says.

The Gators hope it will be enough.

DEFENSE Florida's biggest signing this past offseason might have been a 52-year-old. Giving Todd Grantham a $300,000 raise and contract extension fended off overtures from the NFL's Cincinnati Bengals and ensured some much-needed continuity. Mullen already had to scramble to replace two defensive assistants who bolted for SEC foes in line coach Sal Sunseri (Alabama) and cornerbacks coach Charlton Warren (Georgia). Losing Grantham's experience, ingenuity and aggressive 3-4 scheme would have been a major blow.

"For us to not have to learn a whole new defense and

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	24	vs. Miami #
Sept.	7	Tennessee-Martin
Sept.	14	at Kentucky
Sept.	21	Tennessee
Sept.	28	Towson
Oct.	5	Auburn
Oct.	12	at LSU
Oct.	19	at South Carolina
Nov.	2	vs. Georgia %
Nov.	9	Vanderbilt
Nov.	16	at Missouri
Nov.	30	Florida State

#Orlando, FL %Jacksonville, FL

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 10-3, 5-3 SEC

Sept.	1	Charleston Southern	W	53-6
Sept.	8	Kentucky	L	16-27
Sept.	15	Colorado State	W	48-10
Sept.	22	at Tennessee	W	47-21
Sept.	29	at Mississippi State	W	13-6
Oct.	6	LSU	W	27-19
Oct.	13	at Vanderbilt	W	37-27
Oct.	27	vs. Georgia #	L	17-36
Nov.	3	Missouri	L	17-38
Nov.	10	South Carolina	W	35-31
Nov.	17	Idaho	W	63-10
Nov.	24	at Florida State	W	41-14
Dec.	29	vs. Michigan %	W	41-15

#Jacksonville %Peach Bowl

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	SEC	NATIONAL
Scoring	35.0 ppg	5	22
Rushing	213.2 ypg	4	27
Passing	213.5 ypg	10	83
Total	426.7 ypg	6	42
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**SEC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	20.0 ppg	6	20
Rushing	162.5 ypg	10	65
Passing	180.8 ypg	3	13
Total	343.3 ypg	6	28
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**SEC**	**NATIONAL**
+12	+0.92	1	7

2019 RECRUITS

1. Chris Steele, CB, Los Angeles, CA
2. Kaiir Elam, CB, West Palm Beach, FL
3. Khris Bogle, LB, Fort Lauderdale, FL
4. Ty'Ron Hopper, LB, Alpharetta, GA
5. Keon Zipperer, TE, Lakeland, FL
6. Mohamoud Diabate, LB, Auburn, AL
7. Arjei Henderson, WR, Sugar Land, TX
8. Diwun Black, LB, Forest, MS
9. Deyavie Hammond, OG, Lakeland, FL
10. Lloyd Summerall III, LB, Lakeland, FL
11. Nay'Quan Wright, RB, Miami Gardens, FL
12. Jaelin Humphries, DT, Lawrenceville, GA
13. Michael Tarquin, OT, Ocala, FL
14. Jalon Jones, QB, Richmond, VA
15. Jaydon Hill, CB, Huntsville, AL
16. Wardrick Wilson, OG, Miami Gardens, FL
17. Will Harrod, OT, Clinton, MD
18. Chester Kimbrough, CB, New Orleans, LA
19. Dionte Marks, WR, Deland, FL
20. Riley Simonds, OG, Buford, GA
21. Ja'Markis Weston, WR, Clewiston, FL
22. Kingsley Eguakun, OG, Jacksonville, FL
23. Jesiah Pierre, LB, Mount Dora, FL
24. Trent Whittemore, WR, Gainesville, FL
25. Ethan White, OT, Clearwater, FL

Recruits ranked according to the 247SportsComposite

Harrison McClary

ADVANCED STATS

5 Factors: College Football's Most Important Stats

Field Position[1]		Rank
Offense	31.1	37
Defense	26.3	6
Margin	**+4.8**	**14**

Efficiency[2]		Rank
Offense	47.6%	18
Defense	36.9%	17
Margin	**+10.7%**	**7**

Explosiveness[3]		Rank
Offense	6.2	27
Defense	5.1	33
Margin	**+1.1**	**18**

Finishing Drives[4]		Rank
Offense	5.0	26
Defense	3.7	14
Margin	**+1.3**	**9**

Adjusted TO Margin[5]		Rank
Projected	5.2	28
Actual	12	7
Margin	**+6.8**	**13**

KEY: 1-Average starting field position by yard line; **2**-Rate of successful plays (gaining 50% of necessary yards on 1st down, 70% on 2nd down, 100% on 3rd down); **3**-Explosiveness=yards per play; **4**-Points per trip inside 40-yard line; **5**-TO margin accounting for "luck" • Advanced stats provided by Bill Connelly of SB Nation

NUMBERS TO KNOW

1.0

Florida's offense improved from 5.2 yards per play (100th in FBS) in 2017 to 6.2 (27th) last fall. This improvement of 1.0 yards per play was the fourth largest among power conference teams.

0.9

One of the major sources of improvement: avoiding negative plays. On passing downs (second-and-8 or more, third- or fourth-and-5 or more), Florida quarterbacks were sacked just 0.9 percent of the time, least in the country. In 2017, their passing downs sack rate was 9.8 percent (98th).

2.0

UF dominated first down. The Gators averaged 6.8 yards per play on first down and allowed just 4.8 — the margin of plus-2.0 yards per play was seventh in FBS.

come back and just know that defense that we learned last year and just attack, attack, attack," cornerback Brian Edwards says.

Grantham continually changes coverages, formations, blitz packages and personnel groupings to keep offenses guessing.

The 2018 Gators experienced some growing pains but by season's end were swarming opponents from all angles. In wins against FSU and Michigan, Florida forced five turnovers, secured 10 sacks and held the two teams to 7-of-30 on third down.

The Gators now return seven starters and a host of valuable reserves.

One of the nation's top cornerback tandems (CJ Henderson, Marco Wilson), four-year starter David Reese II at linebacker and edge players Jabari Zuniga and Jonathan Greenard lead the way. Nickel back Trey Dean III, linebacker Amari Burney, a converted safety, and junior safety Brad Stewart Jr. are poised for breakout seasons.

Developing depth at linebacker and in the interior line will be critical. But the Gators expect to pick up where they left off in 2018.

SPECIALISTS The Gators once again boast an impressive 1-2 punch in the kicking game. Punter Tommy Townsend, the younger brother of two-time NCAA leader Johnny, averaged 45.4 yards and also had a key run on a punt fake during a comeback win at Vanderbilt. Placekicker Evan McPherson hit 17-of-19 field goals as a first-year freshman. Freddie Swain was solid returning punts, averaging 10.2 yards on 22 tries, but the Gators will seek more production in the return game.

FINAL ANALYSIS Mullen became the third coach, joining Stanford's Clark Shaughnessy (1940) and Auburn's Gus Malzahn (2013), to coach a Power 5 team to 10 wins after it had won fewer than five the prior season. The next step is a big one: Contend for Florida's first SEC title since 2008. To challenge Georgia in the East, the Gators will need some key pieces to fall into place. But few figured the Gators would be back in top 10 and in the national conversation so quickly. After some lean years under Will Muschamp and Jim McElwain, Mullen's Gators appear poised to once again become an SEC heavyweight.

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (5)

WR	**12**	**Van Jefferson (Sr.)**	8	Trevon Grimes (Jr.)
WR	**89**	**Tyrie Cleveland (Sr.)**	4	Kadarius Toney (Jr.)
WR	**10**	**Josh Hammond (Sr.)**	16	Freddie Swain (Sr.)
LT	72	Stone Forsythe (Jr.)	76	Richard Gouraige (Fr.)
LG	61	Brett Heggie (Jr.)	78	Ethan White (Fr.)
C	**66**	**Nick Buchanan (Sr.)**	65	Kingsley Eguakun (Fr.)
RG	67	Christopher Bleich (Fr.)	75	T.J. Moore (So.)
RT	56	Jean Delance (Jr.)	64	Michael Tarquin (Fr.)
TE	88	Kemore Gamble (So.)	84	Kyle Pitts (So.)
QB	**13**	**Feleipe Franks (Jr.)**	5	Emory Jones (Fr.)
RB	2	Lamical Perine (Sr.)	27	Dameon Pierce (So.)

DEFENSE (7)

Returning Starters in Bold

DE	**92**	**Jabari Zuniga (Sr.)**	17	Zachary Carter (So.)
NT	**95**	**Adam Shuler (Sr.)**	93	Elijah Conliffe (Jr.)
DT	**55**	**Kyree Campbell (Jr.)**	56	Tedarrell Slaton (Jr.)
DE	58	Jonathan Greenard (Sr.)	7	Jeremiah Moon (Jr.)
LB	**33**	**David Reese II (Sr.)**	51	Ventrell Miller (So.)
LB	30	Amari Burney (So.)	41	James Houston IV (So.)
CB	3	Marco Wilson (So.)	22	Chris Steele (Fr.)
CB	**5**	**CJ Henderson (Jr.)**	6	Brian Edwards (Jr.)
STAR	**21**	**Trey Dean III (So.)**	26	John Huggins (So.)
S	2	Brad Stewart Jr. (Jr.)	31	Shawn Davis (Jr.)
S	**13**	**Donovan Stiner (Jr.)**	29	Jeawon Taylor (Sr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	19	Evan McPherson (So.)	**KR**	89	Tyrie Cleveland (Sr.)
P	43	Tommy Townsend (Sr.)	**PR**	16	Freddie Swain (Sr.)

2018 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Feleipe Franks	**322**	**188**	**2,457**	**24**	**6**
Kyle Trask	**22**	**14**	**162**	**1**	**0**
Emory Jones	**16**	**12**	**125**	**2**	**0**

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD
Lamical Perine	**134**	**826**	**6.2**	**7**
Jordan Scarlett	131	776	5.9	5
Dameon Pierce	**69**	**424**	**6.1**	**2**
Feleipe Franks	**110**	**350**	**3.2**	**7**

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Van Jefferson	**35**	**503**	**14.4**	**6**
Josh Hammond	**28**	**369**	**13.2**	**4**
Trevon Grimes	**26**	**364**	**14.0**	**2**

KICKING: **Evan McPherson, 17-19 FGs, 101 points**

TACKLES: Vosean Joseph, 93; **David Reese, 77**

SACKS: Jachai Polite, 11.0

INTERCEPTIONS: Chauncey Gardner-Johnson, 4

Returning Players in **Bold**

SCOUTING THE GATORS

OPPOSING COACHES SIZE UP FLORIDA

"Dan Mullen did a really nice job with his Year 1. He got the culture back and got the locker room back. They're not nearly what they used to be, but you saw Florida football at times, especially down the stretch. But they're losing a lot this year. Could be an interesting kind of quarterback battle between Feleipe Franks and Emory Jones. Jones can run better than Feleipe but doesn't have the arm or the experience. Dan is really good at making his quarterbacks look more versatile than they really are. How are they going to feature Jones more often? I don't think Franks is in danger of losing the job, but they want to bring Jones along and use him as a weapon more often. ... The running backs and receivers are solid but not spectacular, but we expect that offense to be humming so long as they can find the right replacement starters for the offensive line. ... Defensively, they lose their ends, but they always recruit well to that position. The good news is they get their corners back. They lost Marco Wilson on the first drive vs. Kentucky, and CJ Henderson was banged up all year. Henderson had a great year, but he'll be even better if they're both playing. They could be one of the best 1-2's at that position. ... The state of the program is that they're ahead of schedule but still not comparable to Georgia or Alabama or LSU. You can't get that far in one year."

Georgia **Bulldogs**

National Forecast: **3** • SEC East Prediction: **1** • Projected Record: **12-1, 8-0 SEC**

Jake Fromm

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Kirby Smart
Record at School: 32-10 (3 years)
Career Record: 32-10 (3 years)
Offensive Coordinator: James Coley
Defensive Coordinator: Dan Lanning
Location: Athens, GA
Stadium: Sanford Stadium (92,746)

KEY BULLDOGS

JAKE FROMM, QB His freshman and sophomore seasons ranked third and second in school history, respectively, in passing efficiency, and he's already fourth in Georgia history with 54 career touchdown passes.

D'ANDRE SWIFT, RB Even while sharing time last season, Swift ran for 1,049 yards, the fourth most by a Georgia sophomore.

ANDREW THOMAS, LT Thomas has started every game in his first two seasons at Georgia.

KEY LOSSES

DEANDRE BAKER, CB A consensus All-American and the Jim Thorpe Award winner, Baker didn't allow a touchdown the past two seasons.

D'ANDRE WALKER, OLB Got his shot as a starter last year and led the team with 7.5 sacks and 11 TFLs.

LAMONT GAILLARD, C An underrated key to the offense the past two seasons, he's the only starting offensive lineman not back in 2019.

RISING STAR

Inside linebacker **NAKOBE DEAN** had been on Georgia's campus for only a few days before teammates started comparing him to Roquan Smith. Dean has the same smarts and sideline-to-sideline ability. But as good as he is, he's not assured of a starting job, at least not right away.

This is Kirby Smart's fourth year as Georgia's head coach, and the feeling around the program is different. It's calm. There's a sense that things have truly settled in. The offseason saw two big changes, as both coordinators left, but when Smart replaced them both from within, he opted for continuity, showing confidence in himself and his process.

The first three years of Smart's tenure saw him change the culture, reach the national championship game, and then experience the distractions and outside pressure that come with becoming a national power. But there's now a sense that Georgia is truly ready for that pressure — and it doesn't hurt to have three top-3 recruiting classes stacked on top of each other.

As Georgia begins another season of high expectations, there will be questions. None of them, though, will be about the talent base. It is as strong as any team in the nation.

OFFENSE There is no question anymore: This is Jake Fromm's team. There is no Justin Fields or Jacob Eason looming behind him, and there will be no rotating with the backup. This season is all about Fromm taking the next step — becoming one of the nation's truly elite quarterbacks and leading the team to a national title.

Much of that also applies to D'Andre Swift, who is set to become the latest illustrious Georgia tailback, as long as he can stay healthy. The dynamic Swift will be used in plenty of different situations, run and pass. The only question is who gets the carries behind him, and that largely depends on the health of Zamir White, the freshman who was poised for a big role last year before his second ACL tear in less than a year. (It was a different knee.) If White is healthy and close to 100 percent, he will be a big factor in the offense.

The receivers and tight ends are a bit more of a question mark, after the loss of the team's three leading receivers last season, plus several other contributors. But between steady junior Jeremiah Holloman, former five-star Demetris Robertson (who struggled to see the field after transferring from Cal last summer) and a host of other speedy players, Fromm should have plenty of weapons.

There is no question, meanwhile, about the state of Georgia's offensive line: It is loaded, as O-line coach Sam Pittman has recruited at an elite level. Left tackle Andrew Thomas will anchor a line that is deep and should open plenty of holes for the tailbacks while also giving Fromm plenty of time to throw.

That brings us to James Coley, promoted to offensive coordinator after Jim Chaney bolted for Tennessee. Coley's previous play-calling experience came at Miami from 2013-15, and while there were ups and downs, Coley did not have nearly the same talent level at Miami that he will this season, especially at offensive line and running back.

DEFENSE Georgia has had a first-team All-American each of the past two seasons (Roquan Smith and then

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	at Vanderbilt
Sept.	7	Murray State
Sept.	14	Arkansas State
Sept.	21	Notre Dame
Oct.	5	at Tennessee
Oct.	12	South Carolina
Oct.	19	Kentucky
Nov.	2	vs. Florida #
Nov.	9	Missouri
Nov.	16	at Auburn
Nov.	23	Texas A&M
Nov.	30	at Georgia Tech

#Jacksonville

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 11-3, 7-1 SEC

Sept.	1	Austin Peay	W	45-0
Sept.	8	at South Carolina	W	41-17
Sept.	15	Middle Tennessee	W	49-7
Sept.	22	at Missouri	W	43-29
Sept.	29	Tennessee	W	38-12
Oct.	6	Vanderbilt	W	41-13
Oct.	13	at LSU	L	16-36
Oct.	27	vs. Florida #	W	36-17
Nov.	3	at Kentucky	W	34-17
Nov.	10	Auburn	W	27-10
Nov.	17	Massachusetts	W	66-27
Nov.	24	Georgia Tech	W	45-21
Dec.	1	vs. Alabama %	L	28-35
Jan.	1	vs. Texas &	L	21-28

#Jacksonville %Atlanta &Sugar Bowl

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	SEC	NATIONAL
Scoring	37.9 ppg	2	14
Rushing	238.8 ypg	1	16
Passing	226.1 ypg	8	73
Total	464.9 ypg	5	18
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**SEC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	19.2 ppg	4	14
Rushing	134.0 ypg	5	31
Passing	180.3 ypg	2	12
Total	314.3 ypg	2	13
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**SEC**	**NATIONAL**
+3	+0.21	7	50

2019 RECRUITS

1. Nolan Smith, LB, Savannah, GA
2. Nakobe Dean, LB, Horn Lake, MS
3. Travon Walker, DT, Thomaston, GA
4. George Pickens, WR, Hoover, AL
5. Clay Webb, C, Oxford, AL
6. Dominick Blaylock, WR, Marietta, GA
7. Tyrique Stevenson, CB, Miami, FL
8. Lewis Cine, S, Cedar Hill, TX
9. Rian Davis, LB, Apopka, FL
10. Trezman Marshall, LB, Homerville, GA
11. William Norton, DE, Memphis, TN
12. Jermaine Johnson, LB, Eden Prairie, MN*
13. Kenny McIntosh, RB, Fort Lauderdale, FL
14. Makiya Tongue, WR, Baton Rouge, LA
15. Xavier Truss, OT, Warwick, RI
16. Warren McClendon, OT, Brunswick, GA
17. Ryland Goede, TE, Kennesaw, GA
18. DJ Daniel, CB, Griffin, GA*
19. D'Wan Mathis, QB, Belleville, MI
20. Zion Logue, DE, Lebanon, TN
21. Tymon Mitchell, DT, Nashville, TN
22. Brett Seither, TE, Clearwater, FL
23. Tramel Walthour, DL, Hinesville, GA*
24. Stetson Bennett IV, QB, Blackshear, GA*

*junior college transfer

Recruits ranked according to the 247SportsComposite

Paul Abell

ADVANCED STATS

5 Factors: College Football's Most Important Stats

Field Position[1]		Rank
Offense	29.9	66
Defense	28.5	44
Margin	**+1.4**	**52**

Efficiency[2]		Rank
Offense	50.5%	5
Defense	40.9%	63
Margin	**+9.6%**	**11**

Explosiveness[3]		Rank
Offense	7.1	7
Defense	4.9	25
Margin	**+2.2**	**4**

Finishing Drives[4]		Rank
Offense	5.0	24
Defense	4.4	49
Margin	**+0.6**	**27**

Adjusted TO Margin[5]		Rank
Projected	5.2	30
Actual	3	46
Margin	**-2.2**	**84**

KEY: 1-Average starting field position by yard line; **2**-Rate of successful plays (gaining 50% of necessary yards on 1st down, 70% on 2nd down, 100% on 3rd down); **3**-Explosiveness=yards per play; **4**-Points per trip inside 40-yard line; **5**-TO margin accounting for "luck" • Advanced stats provided by Bill Connelly of SB Nation

NUMBERS TO KNOW

2.6

No Sony Michel and Nick Chubb? No problem. The Dawgs still averaged 2.6 rushes per game of 20-plus yards, sixth in FBS and tops in the SEC.

182.4

Just about any quarterback plays better in wins than losses, but Jake Fromm's splits are incredible. In wins, he's completing 69 percent of his passes and averaging 14.2 yards per completion with a 182.4 passer rating. In losses: 54 percent, 12.6, and 122.9, respectively.

15.6

Georgia's defense was mostly effective in 2018, but it sure wasn't very disruptive. The Bulldogs ranked just 75th in havoc rate (tackles for a loss, passes defensed and forced fumbles divided by total plays) at 15.6 percent, 75th in FBS and down from 50th in 2017.

Deandre Baker), but while there may not be a player of that caliber (yet) on this year's defense, the talent base is deeper and better.

There are six players who were five-star recruits, as well as this year's top junior college recruit, edge rusher Jermaine Johnson. The best player in the group may be Nakobe Dean, the freshman inside linebacker already being compared to Smith in his sideline-to-sideline ability. But Georgia's depth is strong enough that even Dean may not start right away.

There are questions, especially at cornerback, where Georgia looked vulnerable in the Sugar Bowl when Baker sat out. That's why the return of strong safety J.R. Reed, a fifth-year senior, is so huge, as he will anchor the back end of the defense.

The defensive line also needs to be better. It should be bolstered by five-star freshman Travon Walker, as well as sophomore Jordan Davis, whose emergence at nose tackle in the latter half of last season was a boon to the run defense. It would also be huge if Tyler Clark, who had a quiet junior season, finished his career strong.

SPECIALISTS Kicker Rodrigo Blankenship is already a folk hero for his exploits during the College Football Playoff his sophomore season. He now has a chance to cement his name in Georgia football lore, as well as the record books, and he also wants to make up for the missed field goal in the 2018 SEC Championship Game that opened the door for Alabama's comeback. Punter Jake Camarda returns after a solid freshman season. The question is at the return spots, vacated by Mecole Hardman and Terry Godwin. There is no shortage of speed on this year's team, so candidates abound. It's just a matter of who gets the jobs and whether they can be dependable.

FINAL ANALYSIS No one within the program will come out and say it, but everyone knows what's left for the Bulldogs to do: beat Alabama and win the national championship. Perhaps in that order. Perhaps in the same game.

Georgia has had Alabama on the ropes twice in a row, and that was before improving the talent base to the point where it is now. That doesn't mean it will happen, as the Bulldogs are painfully aware.

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (6)

WR	9	Jeremiah Holloman (Jr.)	5	Matt Landers (So.)
WR	87	Tyler Simmons (Sr.)	14	Trey Blount (Jr.)
WR	16	Demetris Robertson (Jr.)		Dominick Blaylock (Fr.)
LT	**71**	**Andrew Thomas (Jr.)**	**77**	**Cade Mays (So.)**
LG	**66**	**Solomon Kindley (Jr.)**		Clay Webb (Fr.)
C	55	Trey Hill (So.)	50	Warren Ericson (Fr.)
RG	69	Jamaree Salyer (So.)	74	Ben Cleveland (Jr.)
RT	**79**	**Isaiah Wilson (So.)**		Warren McClendon (Fr.)
TE	89	Charlie Woerner (Sr.)	86	John FitzPatrick (Fr.)
QB	**11**	**Jake Fromm (Jr.)**		Stetson Bennett (So.)
RB	**7**	**D'Andre Swift (Jr.)**	3	Zamir White (Fr.)

DEFENSE (7)

Returning Starters in Bold

DE	10	Malik Herring (Jr.)	51	David Marshall (Sr.)
DT	**52**	**Tyler Clark (Sr.)**	**5**	**Julian Rochester (Sr.)**
NT	99	Jordan Davis (So.)	94	Michael Barnett (Sr.)
OLB	1	Brenton Cox (So.)	**84**	**Walter Grant (Jr.)**
ILB	30	Tae Crowder (Sr.)		Nakobe Dean (Fr.)
ILB	32	Monty Rice (Jr.)	41	Channing Tindall (So.)
OLB	19	Adam Anderson (So.)		Jermaine Johnson (Jr.)
CB	**3**	**Tyson Campbell (So.)**	23	Mark Webb (Jr.)
CB	27	Eric Stokes (So.)	**26**	**Tyrique McGhee (Sr.)**
FS	**2**	**Richard LeCounte (Jr.)**	6	Otis Reese (So.)
SS	**20**	**J.R. Reed (Sr.)**		Lewis Cine (Fr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	98	Rodrigo Blankenship (Sr.)	KR	Dominick Blaylock (Fr.)
P	90	Jake Camarda (So.)	PR	Dominick Blaylock (Fr.)

2018 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Jake Fromm	**306**	**206**	**2,749**	**30**	**6**
Justin Fields	39	27	328	4	0

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD
D'Andre Swift	**163**	**1,049**	**6.4**	**10**
Elijah Holyfield	159	1,018	6.4	7
Brian Herrien	**50**	**295**	**5.9**	**3**
James Cook	**41**	**284**	**6.9**	**2**

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Riley Ridley	44	570	13.0	9
Mecole Hardman	34	532	15.6	7
D'Andre Swift	**32**	**297**	**9.3**	**3**
Isaac Nauta	30	430	14.3	3

KICKING: **Rodrigo Blankenship, 19-23 FGs, 122 points**

TACKLES: **Richard LeCounte, 74; J.R. Reed, 66**

SACKS: D'Andre Walker, 7.5

INTERCEPTIONS: 3 players tied with 2

Returning Players in **Bold**

SCOUTING THE BULLDOGS

OPPOSING COACHES SIZE UP GEORGIA

"I think it's fair to say Kirby got Georgia to that Alabama level faster than Nick Saban got Alabama there. They're ready to roll. Obviously they lose some guys, some wideouts, but on offense Kirby's recruiting already has this program in a reload mentality. It's scary how fast they've recruited. There's a few spots you can look at where they need someone to step in, center, and receiver. At tight end they got hit with another early declare (Isaac Nauta) and a transfer (Luke Ford). But there's competition at every spot. … The two young backs, James Cook and Zamir White, they look exactly like what you expect in a Georgia backfield. They might not miss a beat. … I think with Jake Fromm coming back and Jim Chaney leaving they're going to throw the ball a little bit more, I think they'll spread it out a little bit more in their base stuff. … The biggest question mark is James Coley as a first-time play caller in the SEC. That's going to be scary at first. And in that situation the responsibility is solely on you if it goes bad, because the talent is all over the field. But Fromm helps you out there. He's comfortable with his stuff. … This is the best roster, both talent and depth, in the division and the first or second best in the league with Alabama. They'll develop that defense just fine. It comes down to play calling and that SEC title game."

Kentucky **Wildcats**

National Forecast: **48** • SEC East Prediction: **6** • Projected Record: **6-6, 2-6 SEC**

Terry Wilson

Following the program's best season in more than 40 years, it is a time of transition for Kentucky.

Gone are National Defensive Player of the Year Josh Allen, all-time leading rusher Benny Snell and 12 other starters from the 10-win Citrus Bowl champion squad. Improvements in the passing game and from several young defenders will be needed to carry the program's momentum into another bowl season.

The good news for Kentucky fans is that there is young talent returning at several key positions and a nucleus of veteran leadership from former U.S. Army All-American recruits Kash Daniel, Landon Young and Drake Jackson, now in their fourth year on campus.

OFFENSE With Snell gone, Kentucky will aim for a more balanced offensive attack in 2019. In order to accomplish that goal, the Wildcats will need improvement from quarterback Terry Wilson, who ranked 14th in the SEC in passing yards per game last season (145), and a wide receiver group lacking consistent playmakers outside of do-everything slot receiver Lynn Bowden Jr.

"I think you are going to see a jump across the board with our wide receiver play," Kentucky coach Mark Stoops says. "We have challenged those guys. But, Lynn coming back going into his junior year … growth, you want to see that. We would like to get him the ball more, and I believe we will. But, you also need other guys to step up."

Even if the passing game improves, do not expect Kentucky to completely abandon the power-rushing attack that found so much success over the past three seasons. Instead of relying on one powerhouse back like Snell, Kentucky is expected to split carries among three or four backs, led by junior Asim "A.J." Rose, who averaged 6.2 yards per carry as Snell's backup last season.

The offensive line lost three starters, including All-American Bunchy Stallings, but will be boosted by the return of Young, a former five-star recruit and starter at left tackle, from a knee injury that cost him the entire 2018 season.

DEFENSE Kentucky must replace seven starters from one of the best defenses in program history, including the entire secondary. It seems inevitable that the Wildcats will take a step back after ranking sixth nationally in points allowed per game (16.8), but there is enough returning experience up the middle at the interior defensive line positions, inside linebacker and safety for Stoops and new coordinator Brad White to hope that there won't be a total collapse on that side of the ball.

Nose guard Quinton Bohanna will anchor a defensive line that returns most of its key contributors and will receive a boost from the addition of defensive end Josh Paschal, who missed most of the 2018 season while recovering from a malignant melanoma on his foot. Daniel, a team captain, will be the face of the defense at middle linebacker. The senior will receive help from promising sophomore linebackers Chris Oats and DeAndre Square.

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Mark Stoops
Record at School: 36-39 (6 years)
Career Record: 36-39 (6 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Eddie Gran, Darin Hinshaw
Defensive Coordinator: Brad White
Location: Lexington, KY
Stadium: Kroger Field (61,000)

KEY WILDCATS

TERRY WILSON, QB There's work to do, but he already has shown game-changing playmaking ability with his legs.

LYNN BOWDEN JR., WR UK's most talented playmaker ranked fifth in the SEC in all-purpose yards per game (111.9) in just his second season playing wide receiver.

LOGAN STENBERG, OG The enforcer on Kentucky's offensive line will look to follow Bunchy Stallings in earning All-America honors.

KEY LOSSES

BENNY SNELL, RB Left after three seasons as the program's all-time leading rusher (3,873 yards) and owner of 13 other school records.

JOSH ALLEN, OLB The former two-star recruit developed into a top-five draft pick and National Defensive Player of the Year in 2018.

BUNCHY STALLINGS, OG One of two first-team All-Americans on Kentucky's 2018 roster.

RISING STAR

Wide receiver **AHMAD WAGNER** did not catch a pass in his first season of college football after three years playing basketball at Iowa, but 2018 was always going to be about relearning the game. He has the physical gifts to emerge as a key weapon in the passing game.

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	Toledo
Sept.	7	Eastern Michigan
Sept.	14	Florida
Sept.	21	at Mississippi State
Sept.	28	at South Carolina
Oct.	12	Arkansas
Oct.	19	at Georgia
Oct.	26	Missouri
Nov.	9	Tennessee
Nov.	16	at Vanderbilt
Nov.	23	Tennessee-Martin
Nov.	30	Louisville

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 10-3, 5-3 SEC

Sept.	1	Central Michigan	W	35-20
Sept.	8	at Florida	W	27-16
Sept.	15	Murray State	W	48-10
Sept.	22	Mississippi State	W	28-7
Sept.	29	South Carolina	W	24-10
Oct.	6	at Texas A&M (ot)	L	14-20
Oct.	20	Vanderbilt	W	14-7
Oct.	27	at Missouri	W	15-14
Nov.	3	Georgia	L	17-34
Nov.	10	at Tennessee	L	7-24
Nov.	17	Middle Tennessee	W	34-23
Nov.	24	at Louisville	W	56-10
Jan.	1	vs. Penn State #	W	27-24

#Citrus Bowl

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	SEC	NATIONAL
Scoring	26.6 ppg	12	85
Rushing	199.4 ypg	6	40
Passing	161.5 ypg	14	117
Total	360.8 ypg	12	104
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**SEC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	16.8 ppg	2	6
Rushing	151.6 ypg	8	51
Passing	186.3 ypg	4	18
Total	337.9 ypg	4	23
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**SEC**	**NATIONAL**
+2	+0.15	8	54

2019 RECRUITS

1. Jared Casey, LB, Louisville, KY
2. J.J. Weaver, LB, Louisville, KY
3. Moses Douglass, S, Springfield, OH
4. M.J. Devonshire, CB, Aliquippa, PA
5. K.D. McDaniel, LB, Tifton, GA
6. Taj Dodson, DB, Union Grove, GA
7. Travis Tisdale, RB, Valdosta, GA
8. Isaiah Gibson, DT, Springfield, OH
9. Shawn'Kel Knight-Goff, LB, Louisville, KY
10. Tae Tae Crumes, WR, Louisville, KY
11. Marquez Bembry, LB, Stone Mountain, GA*
12. Nik Ognenovic, TE, Fort Lauderdale, FL
13. Quandre Mosely, S, Brunswick, GA*
14. Cavon Butler, DT, Toledo, OH
15. Brandin Echols, CB, Southaven, MS*
16. Jalen Geiger, CB, Columbia, SC
17. Tra Wilkins, LB, Stone Mountain, GA
18. Amani Gilmore, QB, Amite, LA
19. Nik Scalzo, QB, Fort Lauderdale, FL
20. DeMarcus Harris, WR, Vero Beach, FL
21. Eli Cox, OG, Nicholasville, KY
22. Jake Pope, OT, Fort Lauderdale, FL

* junior college transfer

Recruits ranked according to the 247SportsComposite

Joe Robbins

ADVANCED STATS

5 Factors: College Football's Most Important Stats

Field Position[1]		Rank
Offense	29.7	72
Defense	25.6	3
Margin	+4.1	23

Efficiency[2]		Rank
Offense	42.8%	60
Defense	38.5%	33
Margin	+4.3%	40

Explosiveness[3]		Rank
Offense	5.6	73
Defense	5.2	40
Margin	+0.4	55

Finishing Drives[4]		Rank
Offense	4.4	85
Defense	3.5	8
Margin	+0.9	20

Adjusted TO Margin[5]		Rank
Projected	6.5	14
Actual	2	52
Margin	-4.5	110

KEY: **1**-Average starting field position by yard line; **2**-Rate of successful plays (gaining 50% of necessary yards on 1st down, 70% on 2nd down, 100% on 3rd down); **3**-Explosiveness=yards per play; **4**-Points per trip inside 40-yard line; **5**-TO margin accounting for "luck" • Advanced stats provided by Bill Connelly of SB Nation

NUMBERS TO KNOW

1977

Last fall, Kentucky won double-digit games and finished in the AP top 12 for the first time since 1977, beat Florida for the first time since 1986, and beat the same number of ranked-at-the-time opponents (three) as they had from 2010-17. An historic season in every way.

12.1

UK pulled off this historic season despite almost no big-play ability. The Wildcats averaged just 12.1 gains per game of 10-plus yards (114th in FBS) and just 1.8 of 30-plus (101st).

19.8

UK's havoc rate (tackles for a loss, passes defensed and forced fumbles divided by total plays) was 19.8 percent, ninth in FBS and a drastic improvement over 2017 (14.1 percent, 93rd). Of course, Josh Allen created 30.5 of those havoc plays on his own.

"When you've got guys inside [on the line] that are hunting, good things happen," White says. "We've got that right now. We've talked about we need to be strong down the middle, and we've been strong down the middle both in the run game and in the pass game."

To replace Allen and the secondary, Kentucky will need help from its 2019 signing class, which included six defensive backs and five outside linebackers. Safeties Davonte Robinson and Jordan Griffin should slide into starting roles after serving two years as key backups, but junior college transfers Brandin Echols and Quandre Mosely will be needed for early contributions at cornerback, where there is no returning experience of note.

Four-star signees J.J. Weaver and Jared Casey could compete for snaps in the outside linebacker rotation, where junior strong-side linebacker Jamar Watson will be counted on to step up and account for at least part of Allen's lost production.

SPECIALISTS Australian punter Max Duffy should be a weapon after ranking sixth in the SEC in average punt distance (44.8 per kick) in his first full season of American football. Bowden has shown the ability to make game-changing plays as a returner with two touchdowns on punt returns last season. Placekicking remains a question, with redshirt freshman Chance Poore set to take over the No. 1 job. Poore has a stronger leg than former starter Miles Butler, but inconsistency prevented him from seizing the job a year ago despite Butler ranking 12th of 14 qualifying SEC kickers in field goal percentage (63.6).

FINAL ANALYSIS Considering that Kentucky went 41 years between 10-win seasons, it is fair to expect the Wildcats to take a step back in 2019. However, there is enough returning talent to make a fourth consecutive bowl berth a reasonable goal, and as Stoops has been quick to note all offseason, it's not like many pundits expected much from the players Kentucky is now tasked with replacing. If the passing game improves and some young defenders emerge, the schedule opens the door for Kentucky to push for eight or nine wins. There is a real risk of falling behind the SEC East programs Kentucky has passed in recent years, though, if that progress does not happen.

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (4)

WR	82	Josh Ali (Jr.)	85	Bryce Oliver (Fr.)
WR	81	Isaiah Epps (Jr.)	14	Ahmad Wagner (Sr.)
WR	**1**	**Lynn Bowden Jr. (Jr.)**	18	Clevan Thomas Jr. (So.)
LT	67	Landon Young (Jr.)	78	Nick Lewis (Fr.)
LG	**71**	**Logan Stenberg (Sr.)**	61	Austin Dotson (So.)
C	**52**	**Drake Jackson (Jr.)**	60	Quintin Wilson (Fr.)
RG	79	Luke Fortner (Jr.)	77	Mason Wolfe (Sr.)
RT	70	Darian Kinnard (So.)	66	Naasir Watkins (So.)
TE	83	Justin Rigg (So.)	88	Keaton Upshaw (Fr.)
QB	**3**	**Terry Wilson (Jr.)**	17	Walker Wood (So.)
RB	10	A.J. Rose (Jr.)	24	Chris Rodriguez Jr. (Fr.)

DEFENSE (4)

Returning Starters in Bold

DE	**91**	**Calvin Taylor Jr. (Sr.)**	92	Phil Hoskins (Sr.)
NG	**95**	**Quinton Bohanna (Jr.)**	50	Marquan McCall (So.)
DE	90	T.J. Carter (Sr.)	4	Josh Paschal (So.)
JLB	15	Jordan Wright (So.)	6	Jared Casey (Fr.)
MLB	**56**	**Kash Daniel (Sr.)**	44	Jamin Davis (So.)
WLB	22	Chris Oats (So.)	43	DeAndre Square (So.)
SLB	**31**	**Jamar Watson (Jr.)**		J.J. Weaver (Fr.)
CB	26	Brandin Echols (Jr.)	21	Quandre Mosely (Jr.)
CB	27	Cedrick Dort Jr. (So.)	32	Jamari Brown (Fr.)
S	3	Jordan Griffin (Sr.)	23	Tyrell Ajian (So.)
S	9	Davonte Robinson (Jr.)	29	Yusuf Corker (So.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	12	Chance Poore (Fr.)	KR	1	Lynn Bowden Jr. (Jr.)
P	93	Max Duffy (Jr.)	PR	1	Lynn Bowden Jr. (Jr.)

2018 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Terry Wilson	**268**	**180**	**1,889**	**11**	**8**
Gunnar Hoak	26	13	167	2	1

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD
Benny Snell Jr.	289	1,449	5.0	16
Terry Wilson	**135**	**547**	**4.1**	**4**
A.J. Rose	**71**	**442**	**6.2**	**5**
Sihiem King	12	58	4.8	0

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Lynn Bowden Jr.	**67**	**745**	**11.1**	**5**
C.J. Conrad	30	318	10.6	3
David Bouvier	16	209	13.1	2
Dorian Baker	13	133	10.2	0

KICKING: Miles Butler, 7-11 FGs, 61 points; **Chance Poore, 2-4 FGs, 9 points**

TACKLES: Josh Allen, 88; Darius West, 86

SACKS: Josh Allen, 17.0

INTERCEPTIONS: Darius West, 3

Returning Players in **Bold**

SCOUTING THE WILDCATS

OPPOSING COACHES SIZE UP KENTUCKY

"Tons of questions. Maybe the team that will look the most different on both sides this season. They lose a ton on defense. You don't replace a Josh Allen at Alabama, and you sure as hell don't at Kentucky. He was the best edge rusher in the game. Their secondary is basically starting over. The good news is that it's a line of scrimmage league and they're really solid on both the offensive and defensive line. They get their left tackle Landon Young back from the ACL tear. He'll be a huge asset. ... I'd worry more about the offense — the needs are obvious. Losing Benny Snell is a huge blow, he's their all-time yards guy, but they've got a stable behind Snell of faster, more dynamic guys, not grinders. Eddie Gran will have to go back to that Cincinnati stuff, spreading the ball around, going faster, but they have to get more efficient quarterback play. Terry Wilson can run like a scalded dog, but he's got to improve throwing the ball on third down. They need better execution passing and receiving. They won't have the defense to bail out short drives. ... They're going to fall back some this year because of how good the league is, but I think Mark Stoops has done a great job. Even if they end up .500 this season, they're still going in the right direction. They're just not a reload team. They're going to need more than one year to build. But Stoops has them in a really nice spot."

Missouri Tigers

National Forecast: **23** • SEC East Prediction: **3** • Projected Record: **8-4, 4-4 SEC**

Larry Rountree III

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Barry Odom
Record at School: 19-19 (3 years)
Career Record: 19-19 (3 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Derek Dooley
Defensive Coordinator: Ryan Walters
Location: Columbia, MO
Stadium: Memorial Stadium (71,168)

KEY TIGERS

LARRY ROUNTREE III, RB The Mizzou passing game will be dealing with change at QB and WR this spring, but the Tigers still have Rountree, a 1,200-yard rusher.

JORDAN ELLIOTT, DT Despite zero starts, was third on the team in tackles for a loss (eight) and sacks (three) in 2018. Now he's the anchor.

TRE'VOUR WALLACE-SIMMS, RG Has started 26 straight games for the Tigers and earned first-team All-SEC honors after a strong 2018.

KEY LOSSES

DREW LOCK, QB Tossed into the deep end as a true freshman in 2015, he ended up throwing for 12,000-plus yards and 99 touchdowns.

TERRY BECKNER JR., DT After season-ending knee injuries in each of his first two seasons, had 22 TFLs and 10.5 sacks in his final two years.

EMANUEL HALL, WR Maybe the best deep threat in college football; ended up with 70 catches for 1,645 yards and 14 TDs in 2017-18.

RISING STAR

Mizzou is desperate for an end to emerge and provide some disruption, and **TRAJAN JEFFCOAT**, a true sophomore from Columbia, S.C., is as likely as anyone to fill that role. Coach Barry Odom told media the sophomore has had "as good an offseason as anybody."

After starting Barry Odom's tenure with 13 losses in 18 games, Missouri has stabilized. The Tigers have gone 14–6 since a 1–5 start in 2017, and they haven't lost in November since 2016.

Not that Mizzou fans have noticed. The Tigers' 2015 collapse coincided with the Mizzou racial protests and the football team's brief boycott; due to either or both of those causes, attendance has dipped 21 percent since 2014.

Maybe the emergence of a new rival — the NCAA — can help spur some energy.

In January, the NCAA announced that Missouri was banned from the 2019 postseason for the actions of a rogue tutor who helped former student athletes complete coursework. The sanctions also included vacated wins, a five percent reduction of scholarships and, for some reason, recruiting restrictions. The school not only appealed the punishment but also launched a statewide Make It Right campaign. The fan base appears more united at the moment than it has been for four years. Will that energy bring fans back to Faurot Field, bowl ban or no?

OFFENSE It appeared there might be a reset for the offense following the departure of four-year starting quarterback Drew Lock. Instead, Odom and offensive coordinator Derek Dooley elected to bring in a ringer.

Former Clemson starter Kelly Bryant knows all about succeeding first-round QBs — he helped to guide those Tigers to the College Football Playoff in their first year without Deshaun Watson. Bryant completed 66 percent of his passes over parts of four seasons at Clemson, and he's a more willing runner than Lock was.

Lock was expected to lean heavily on receiver Emanuel Hall and tight end Albert Okwuegbunam in 2018, but due to injuries, they were rarely on the field at the same time after September, and freshmen Jalen Knox and Kam Scott combined to catch 35 passes for 633 yards and five touchdowns. Knox is more experienced than anyone expected now that he must replace Hall for good.

Bryant will be helped by the veteran presence of both Okwuegbunam and senior slot man Johnathon Johnson, who has 124 career catches. He could also benefit from the arrival of fellow grad transfer Jonathan Nance, who led Arkansas in receiving in 2017.

Running back Larry Rountree III enjoyed quite the 2018 breakout. The junior-to-be rushed for 1,216 yards as a sophomore, starting slowly and exploding late. He might have been the best back in the SEC at the end of the year. Sophomore second-stringer Tyler Badie is a custom-made third down back; he and Rountree complemented each other well and should do so again.

With Bryant and a burly offensive line, they could help Dooley to establish one of the league's more formidable run games. Three of last year's starting linemen return, led by all-conference guard Tre'Vour Wallace-Simms. Mizzou enjoyed some of the best blocking stats in the conference last year, and while losing right tackle Paul Adams hurts, the continuity is still solid up front.

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	at Wyoming
Sept.	7	West Virginia
Sept.	14	SE Missouri State
Sept.	21	South Carolina
Oct.	5	Troy
Oct.	12	Ole Miss
Oct.	19	at Vanderbilt
Oct.	26	at Kentucky
Nov.	9	at Georgia
Nov.	16	Florida
Nov.	23	Tennessee
Nov.	30	at Arkansas #

#Little Rock, AR

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 8-5, 4-4 SEC

Sept.	1	Tennessee-Martin	W	51-14
Sept.	8	Wyoming	W	40-13
Sept.	15	at Purdue	W	40-37
Sept.	22	Georgia	L	29-43
Oct.	6	at South Carolina	L	35-37
Oct.	13	at Alabama	L	10-39
Oct.	20	Memphis	W	65-33
Oct.	27	Kentucky	L	14-15
Nov.	3	at Florida	W	38-17
Nov.	10	Vanderbilt	W	33-28
Nov.	17	at Tennessee	W	50-17
Nov.	23	Arkansas	W	38-0
Dec.	31	vs. Oklahoma State #	L	33-38

#Liberty Bowl

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	SEC	NATIONAL
Scoring	36.6 ppg	3	18
Rushing	202.4 ypg	5	33
Passing	279.4 ypg	3	22
Total	481.8 ypg	3	13
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**SEC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	25.5 ppg	9	50
Rushing	126.5 ypg	4	22
Passing	262.0 ypg	14	112
Total	388.5 ypg	10	62
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**SEC**	**NATIONAL**
+1	+0.08	9	57

2019 RECRUITS

1. Jalani Williams, S, St. Louis, MO
2. Jack Buford, OG, St. Louis, MO
3. Connor Bazelak, QB, Dayton, OH
4. Jamie Pettway, LB, Albany, GA
5. Ishmael Burdine, DB, Slidell, LA
6. C.J. Boone, WR, St. Louis, MO
7. Luke Griffin, OT, Chatsworth, GA
8. Maurice Massey, WR, St. Louis, MO
9. Darius Robinson, DE, Canton, MI
10. Martez Manuel, S, Columbia, MO
11. Sci Martin Jr., DE, New Orleans, LA*
12. Chris Daniels, DT, Euless, TX*
13. Anthony Watkins, RB, Fort Worth, TX
14. Niko Hea, TE, St. St. Louis, MO
15. Stacy Brown, DB, Duncanville, TX
16. Z'Core Brooks, DE, Dallas, TX
17. Isaiah McGuire, DE, Tulsa, OK
18. Devin Nicholson, LB, Detroit, MI
19. Thalen Robinson, OT, Arlington, TX
20. Aidan Harrison, S, New Lothrop, MI
21. Chris Shearin, CB, Suffolk, VA
22. Angel Matute, OT, Rancho Cucamonga, CA*

*junior college transfer

Recruits ranked according to the 247SportsComposite

Zach Bland/Mizzou Athletics

ADVANCED STATS

5 Factors: College Football's Most Important Stats

Field Position[1]		Rank
Offense	30.1	58
Defense	27.9	28
Margin	+2.2	43

Efficiency[2]		Rank
Offense	48.7%	9
Defense	39.8%	48
Margin	+8.9%	13

Explosiveness[3]		Rank
Offense	6.2	24
Defense	5.7	68
Margin	+0.5	42

Finishing Drives[4]		Rank
Offense	4.8	36
Defense	3.9	22
Margin	+0.9	18

Adjusted TO Margin[5]		Rank
Projected	-2.4	93
Actual	1	57
Margin	+3.4	31

KEY: **1**-Average starting field position by yard line; **2**-Rate of successful plays (gaining 50% of necessary yards on 1st down, 70% on 2nd down, 100% on 3rd down); **3**-Explosiveness=yards per play; **4**-Points per trip inside 40-yard line; **5**-TO margin accounting for "luck" • Advanced stats provided by Bill Connelly of SB Nation

NUMBERS TO KNOW

48.7

Mizzou's offensive success rate (percentage of plays that gained at least 50 percent of necessary yardage on first down, 70 percent on second or 100 percent on third or fourth) improved from 45.6 percent to 48.7 (ninth in FBS).

14/2.9

Tiger runners were stuffed at or behind the line on only 14 percent of non-sack carries (sixth in FBS), and quarterbacks took sacks on only 2.9 percent of pass attempts (sixth).

55.7

The Missouri defense allowed just a 55.7 percent completion rate, 31st in FBS. That was awfully high considering the lack of disruption involved: Mizzou was 108th in sack rate (4.9 percent), and only 26 percent of opponent incompletions were the result of an interception or breakup (124th).

DEFENSE The Missouri defense was for years built around a seemingly endless supply of star ends, but in 2018, Missouri ranked 108th in sack rate; no end had more than 2.5 sacks.

Mind you, the Tiger front was still pretty formidable in other ways. Mizzou allowed just 126.5 rushing yards per game (22nd nationally) and allowed just 3.7 yards per carry (32nd). Jordan Elliott, a former Texas Longhorn, is a potential star in the middle, and junior end Akial Byers is rock solid against the run as well.

You know what can make your defensive tackles even more successful? Having a tackling machine behind them. Kearney, Mo., native Cale Garrett has logged 264 combined solo and assisted tackles in his career.

End remains a question mark. Junior Chris Turner is experienced, Junior college transfer Sci Martin Jr. is a former LSU Tiger, and the staff has been high on sophomore Trajan Jeffcoat for a while. Can someone actually emerge to scare the quarterback every now and then?

Because the pass rush was lacking, it's hard to know what to think of the secondary. That the Tigers ranked 31st in completion rate allowed (55.7 percent) is impressive considering how much time quarterbacks had, but Mizzou's performance oscillated constantly between great and terrible.

Cornerbacks Christian Holmes, DeMarkus Acy and Adam Sparks all return, as do four veteran safeties. Mizzou was young for years in the defensive backfield, but that is most certainly not the case in 2019.

SPECIALISTS After four dominant seasons, punter Corey Fatony departs. He averaged nearly 44 yards per kick for his career. Tucker McCann, who has steadily improved in his placekicking, will get the first crack at replacing him.

FINAL ANALYSIS The specter of the appealed sanctions makes it hard to set expectations for the Tigers. On paper, if Bryant thrives, they are as qualified as anyone for the label of "SEC East dark horse." But we don't even know if they're eligible for the title. Regardless, Bryant will help to smooth out what could have been a bumpy transition from Lock et al. Another season in the seven-to-nine-win range seems pretty realistic.

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (7)

WR	4	Jonathan Nance (Sr.)	13	Kam Scott (So.)
WR	**9**	**Jalen Knox (So.)**	21	Alex Ofodile (Sr.)
SLOT	**12**	**Johnathon Johnson (Sr.)**	14	Dominic Gicinto (So.)
LT	**70**	**Yasir Durant (Sr.)**	76	Javon Foster (Fr.)
LG	79	Larry Borom (So.)	59	Case Cook (So.)
C	**55**	**Trystan Colon-Castillo (Jr.)**	67	Jonah Dubinski (Sr.)
RG	**75**	**Tre'Vour Wallace-Simms (Sr.)**	73	Mike Ruth (Fr.)
RT	50	Hyrin White (So.)	74	Angel Matute (Jr.)
TE	**81**	**Albert Okwuegbunam (Jr.)**	82	Daniel Parker (So.)
QB	7	Kelly Bryant (Sr.)	5	Taylor Powell (So.)
RB	**34**	**Larry Rountree III (Jr.)**	1	Tyler Badie (So.)

DEFENSE (6)

Returning Starters in Bold

DE	**97**	**Akial Byers (Jr.)**	15	Trajan Jeffcoat (So.)
DT	1	Jordan Elliott (Jr.)	13	Chris Daniels (Jr.)
DT	78	Kobie Whiteside (Jr.)	56	Antar Thompson (Jr.)
DE	**39**	**Chris Turner (Jr.)**		Sci Martin Jr. (Jr.)
OLB	32	Nick Bolton (So.)	16	Gerald Nathan Jr. (Fr.)
MLB	**47**	**Cale Garrett (Sr.)**	25	Jamal Brooks (Jr.)
CB	**2**	**DeMarkus Acy (Sr.)**	8	Jarvis Ware (So.)
CB	**21**	**Christian Holmes (Jr.)**	14	Adam Sparks (Jr.)
FS	18	Joshuah Bledsoe (Jr.)	.11	Jordan Ulmer (Jr.)
SS	3	Ronnell Perkins (Sr.)	20	Khalil Oliver (Sr.)
NB	**9**	**Tyree Gillespie (Jr.)**	4	Jalani Williams (Fr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	19	Tucker McCann (Sr.)	**KR**	1	Tyler Badie (So.)
P	19	Tucker McCann (Sr.)	**PR**	17	Richaud Floyd (Sr.)

2018 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Drew Lock	437	275	3,498	28	8
Taylor Powell	**14**	**6**	**134**	**0**	**0**

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD
Larry Rountree	**225**	**1,216**	**5.4**	**11**
Damarea Crockett	147	709	4.8	7
Tyler Badie	**89**	**437**	**4.9**	**2**
Drew Lock	55	175	3.2	6

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Johnathon Johnson	**59**	**737**	**12.5**	**5**
Albert Okwuegbunam	**43**	**466**	**10.8**	**6**
Emanuel Hall	37	828	22.4	6
Jalen Knox	**27**	**419**	**15.5**	**3**

KICKING: **Tucker McCann, 24-33 FGs, 123 points**

TACKLES: **Cale Garrett, 112;** Terez Hall, 74

SACKS: Terez Hall, 5.0

INTERCEPTIONS: **DeMarkus Acy, 3;** Cam Hilton, 3

Returning Players in **Bold**

SCOUTING THE TIGERS

OPPOSING COACHES SIZE UP MISSOURI

"Losing Drew Lock is massive for them. He might've been the best QB in the SEC besides, or maybe even including, Tua (Tagovailoa). What's Derek Dooley gonna do with Kelly Bryant? He can be a special talent, but you need to build around him. He's not Lock. If Dooley is smart, they're going to bring in a lot of the stuff Bryant did at Clemson rather than fit him into Lock's shoes. They could have a really solid backfield with Bryant and the running back Larry Rountree. He might be the sleeper running back in college football. They were really banged up there last year, but he really caught on well. If they can stay healthy running the ball, they've got a great receiving corps — all their top guys are back. The offensive line is solid enough with returning guys that they could be really good right away. … Barry Odom is the secret weapon on defense. He gets a group of OK players and just a few legit SEC guys and then they're always in good position. They fit gaps really well, they're always where they're supposed to be. They're not an easy defense to wear down. Jordan Elliott, the kid from Texas, could be really special up front. They'll really miss (Terry) Beckner. … I think they can jump up and scare a lot of teams in the conference if they can keep things together with the (NCAA investigation). Take away the controversy stuff and this could be a really fun offensive football team."

South Carolina **Gamecocks**

National Forecast: **32** • SEC East Prediction: **4** • Projected Record: **6-6, 3-5 SEC**

Jake Bentley

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Will Muschamp
Record at School: 22-17 (3 years)
Career Record: 50-38 (7 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Bryan McClendon
Defensive Coordinator: Travaris Robinson
Location: Columbia, SC
Stadium: Williams-Brice Stadium (80,250)

KEY GAMECOCKS

JAKE BENTLEY, QB The senior who has started 32 career games could become the 10th player in SEC history with more than 10,000 career passing yards.

BRYAN EDWARDS, WR A senior with 163 career catches, Edwards takes over the No. 1 wide receiver spot with Deebo Samuel gone.

JAYCEE HORN, CB The sophomore, son of longtime NFL wide receiver Joe Horn, started 10 games as a true freshman.

KEY LOSSES

DEEBO SAMUEL, WR Not only South Carolina's top receiving threat but also the most dynamic kick returner in the SEC.

TY'SON WILLIAMS, RB A part-time starter, Williams transferred out of the program rather than return to a crowded backfield.

ZACK BAILEY, OL A four-year presence up front, Bailey was an NFL caliber player on the O-line.

RISING STAR

Defensive lineman **ZACCH PICKENS** is the first five-star prospect South Carolina has signed under Will Muschamp. The 6'3", 293-pounder enrolled early in order to be able to participate in spring practice and is expected to make an immediate impact on the defensive line.

Will Muschamp likes his team entering his fourth year at South Carolina.

"I thought we culminated a very good spring," Muschamp said after the Gamecocks' spring game. "We've got a deeper team than we have had, more competitive depth at every position. When guys come to practice every day knowing they have to strain to maintain their position, that helps your football team."

He can't like his team's schedule, though. South Carolina has strengthened the program's foundation in three seasons, and the Gamecocks have a roster that should be competitive in the SEC. The problem in 2019 is that they still don't have a roster that figures to be competitive with Clemson and Alabama and Georgia, and maybe even Texas A&M and an improving Florida team — and they play them all this season.

"Everybody knows what kind of schedule we've got," senior offensive lineman Donell Stanley says. "We've got a schedule that can make us or break us. We just have to have the mindset every week of coming out and wanting to dominate, and if you aren't with it, you need to leave."

Muschamp was fired after four seasons at Florida's head coach. That will not happen at South Carolina. He is 22–17 overall and 12–12 in the SEC in his first three years, compiling more wins in that initial time period than any coach in school history. The blemish on Muschamp's résumé: He is 1–11 against ranked teams at South Carolina. The good news (and bad news) is that he'll have plenty of chances to improve that record this fall.

OFFENSE Senior Jake Bentley has 7,385 passing yards and 54 touchdowns in 32 career starts, but he also has 30 career interceptions and shares his head coach's struggles against ranked teams. Bentley is 1–10 in his career against ranked teams, although he did torch eventual national champion Clemson for 510 yards and five touchdown passes last season in a loss.

"The bottom line is we need to take care of the ball. We had 14 interceptions [last year]," Muschamp says. "They are not all on Jake, but that is far too many turnovers from that position, and he understands that. That's the No. 1 area where we've got to make improvement as a football team."

Wide receiver Deebo Samuel is off to the NFL, leaving South Carolina searching for a new No. 1 receiver. Senior Bryan Edwards, who has a career average of 13.7 yards per catch, is ready to fill that void. Teamed with junior Shi Smith, he will give the Gamecocks a good top of the order in the receiving corps. However, given the amount that offensive coordinator Bryan McClendon wants to throw the ball and the pace at which he'd like to be able to play, South Carolina will need at least six players ready every Saturday.

Running back is the least proven position on the offensive side of the ball. The Gamecocks haven't finished higher than 12th in the SEC in rushing in Muschamp's three seasons. Ty'Son Williams transferred out of the program after the 2018 season, seemingly clearing the

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	vs. North Carolina #
Sept.	7	Charleston Southern
Sept.	14	Alabama
Sept.	21	at Missouri
Sept.	28	Kentucky
Oct.	12	at Georgia
Oct.	19	Florida
Oct.	26	at Tennessee
Nov.	2	Vanderbilt
Nov.	9	Appalachian State
Nov.	16	at Texas A&M
Nov.	30	Clemson

#Charlotte

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 7-6, 4-4 SEC

Sept.	1	Coastal Carolina	W	49-15
Sept.	8	Georgia	L	17-41
Sept.	22	at Vanderbilt	W	37-14
Sept.	29	at Kentucky	L	10-24
Oct.	6	Missouri	W	37-35
Oct.	13	Texas A&M	L	23-26
Oct.	27	Tennessee	W	27-24
Nov.	3	at Ole Miss	W	48-44
Nov.	10	at Florida	L	31-35
Nov.	17	Chattanooga	W	49-9
Nov.	24	at Clemson	L	35-56
Dec.	1	Akron	W	28-3
Dec.	29	vs. Virginia #	L	0-28

#Belk Bowl

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	SEC	NATIONAL
Scoring	30.1 ppg	9	57
Rushing	152.8 ypg	12	92
Passing	272.8 ypg	4	26
Total	425.6 ypg	7	43
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**SEC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	27.2 ppg	11	67
Rushing	195.3 ypg	13	95
Passing	229.0 ypg	9	65
Total	424.3 ypg	12	84
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**SEC**	**NATIONAL**
-5	-0.38	12	101

2019 RECRUITS

1. Zacch Pickens, DT, Anderson, SC
2. Ryan Hilinski, QB, Orange CA
3. Joseph Anderson, DE, Murfreesboro, TN
4. Cameron Smith, CB, Blythewood, SC
5. Jaquaze Sorrells, DT, Winter Park, FL
6. Keveon Mullins, WR, Memphis, TN
7. Jammie Robinson, S, Leesburg, GA
8. John Dixon, CB, Tampa, FL
9. Traevon Kenion, TE, Monroe, NC
10. Rodricus Fitten, LB, Atlanta, GA
11. Jakai Moore, OG, Nokesville, VA
12. Derek Boykins, LB, Concord, NC
13. Vincent Murphy, C, Fort Lauderdale, FL
14. Devontae Davis, DE, New Ellenton, SC*
15. Mark Fox, OT, Miami, FL
16. Shilo Sanders, CB, Cedar Hill, TX
17. KeShawn Toney, TE, Williston, SC
18. Kevin Harris, RB, Hinesville, GA
19. Xavier Legette, WR, Mullins, SC
20. Jahmar Brown, LB, Fort Lauderdale, FL
21. Jaylen Nichols, OT, Charlotte, NC
22. Tyquan Johnson, WR, Sylvania, GA
23. William Rogers, OT, Hampton, GA

*junior college transfer

Recruits ranked according to the 247SportsComposite

Paul Abell

ADVANCED STATS

5 Factors: College Football's Most Important Stats

Field Position[1]		Rank
Offense	29.6	76
Defense	28.3	40
Margin	**+1.3**	**54**

Efficiency[2]		Rank
Offense	43.0%	59
Defense	47.9%	120
Margin	**-4.9%**	**104**

Explosiveness[3]		Rank
Offense	6.2	25
Defense	5.6	56
Margin	**+0.6**	**35**

Finishing Drives[4]		Rank
Offense	4.4	88
Defense	4.2	36
Margin	**+0.2**	**60**

Adjusted TO Margin[5]		Rank
Projected	0.6	63
Actual	-5	100
Margin	**-5.6**	**118**

KEY: **1**-Average starting field position by yard line; **2**-Rate of successful plays (gaining 50% of necessary yards on 1st down, 70% on 2nd down, 100% on 3rd down); **3**-Explosiveness=yards per play; **4**-Points per trip inside 40-yard line; **5**-TO margin accounting for "luck" • Advanced stats provided by Bill Connelly of SB Nation

NUMBERS TO KNOW

30

Eliminating special teams tackles (and including assists as 0.5), South Carolina had 30 defenders who averaged at least one tackle per game. Only 10 played in all 13 games, and six of the 10 were freshmen or sophomores.

47.9

The Gamecocks' success rate allowed (percentage of plays that gained at least 50 percent of necessary yardage on first down, 70 percent on second or 100 percent on third or fourth) went from 40.4 percent in 2017 (60th) to 47.9 (120th), the fourth-largest regression in the country.

5.6

Based on national averages for fumble recovery rates and the ratio of interceptions to passes broken up, the Gamecocks' turnover margin should have been plus-0.6. Instead, it was minus-5. That 5.6-turnover difference was the worst turnovers luck in the SEC.

way for senior Rico Dowdle to be the featured back. However, Dowdle, who has a 5.2 yards per carry career average, was limited through spring by a hamstring injury.

"More than anything, we need just consistency at the position, run through contact," Muschamp says. "In our league, you're not going to be able to block everybody. There is going to be a free hat in the box at some point, and you have to be able to make a guy miss, and that's something we need to be able to do better consistently."

DEFENSE A defensive line that coordinator Travaris Robinson calls "our most talented unit" paired with two rising stars at cornerback in Jaycee Horn and Israel Mukuamu give South Carolina a chance to have the best defense of the Muschamp era.

Senior defensive tackle Javon Kinlaw has the kind of first-step quickness that could put him in the first round of next spring's NFL Draft if he plays to his potential this fall, and end D.J. Wonnum returns after a season essentially lost to an ankle injury, to give the Gamecocks a pass-rushing presence on the outside.

Maybe the biggest surprise of last season was how poorly the linebackers played. Senior T.J. Brunson returns in the middle for what he hopes is a redemptive season.

On the back end, Horn (6'1") and Mukuamu (6'4") have a chance to be special. "Those two guys are phenomenal," former South Carolina cornerback Rashad Fenton says. "Both of them have great size that I wish I had."

SPECIALISTS Junior placekicker Parker White, who was placed on scholarship in the spring, and senior punter Joseph Charlton give the Gamecocks a solid kicking combination. The biggest special teams question is who will replace the dynamic Samuel as kickoff returner.

FINAL ANALYSIS Reasonable and realistic South Carolina fans are marking the 2020 season as a big one for Muschamp. The program, which recently opened a $50 million football operations building, has made steady progress on and off the field despite last year's 7–6 record. However, it's tough sledding for the Gamecocks to be stuck geographically between rivals Clemson and Georgia, which are both dominant at the moment.

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (7)

WR	**89**	**Bryan Edwards (Sr.)**	18	OrTre Smith (So.)
WR	**13**	**Shi Smith (Jr.)**	8	Randrecous Davis (Jr.)
WR	6	Josh Vann (So.)	86	Chad Terrell (So.)
LT	**50**	**Sadarius Hutcherson (Jr.)**	75	Jordon Carty (So.)
LG	71	Eric Douglas (So.)	54	Jovaughn Gwyn (Fr.)
C	70	Hank Manos (Fr.)	60	Chandler Farrell (Jr.)
RG	**72**	**Donell Stanley (Sr.)**	76	Jordan Rhodes (So.)
RT	**79**	**Dylan Wonnum (So.)**	51	Maxwell Iyama (Fr.)
TE	87	Kiel Pollard (Sr.)	84	Kyle Markway (Jr.)
QB	**19**	**Jake Bentley (Sr.)**	3	Ryan Hilinski (Fr.)
RB	**5**	**Rico Dowdle (Sr.)**	25	A.J. Turner (Sr.)

DEFENSE (5)

Returning Starters in Bold

DE	8	D.J. Wonnum (Sr.)	19	Brad Johnson (Jr.)
DT	**3**	**Javon Kinlaw (Sr.)**	90	Rick Sandidge (So.)
DT	95	Kobe Smith (Sr.)	26	Zacch Pickens (Fr.)
DE	**5**	**Keir Thomas (Sr.)**	15	Aaron Sterling (Jr.)
LB	**44**	**Sherrod Greene (Jr.)**	30	Damani Staley (Jr.)
LB	**6**	**T.J. Brunson (Sr.)**	53	Ernest Jones (So.)
LB	35	Daniel Fennell (Sr.)	42	Rosendo Louis Jr. (So.)
CB	**7**	**Jaycee Horn (So.)**	21	Jamyest Williams (Jr.)
CB	24	Israel Mukuamu (So.)	25	A.J. Turner (Sr.)
S	10	R.J. Roderick (So.)	31	Jamel Cook (Jr.)
S	21	Jamyest Williams (Jr.)	29	J.T. Ibe (Sr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	43	Parker White (Jr.)	**KR**	25	A.J. Turner (Sr.)
P	20	Joseph Charlton (Sr.)	**PR**	89	Bryan Edwards (Sr.)

2018 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Jake Bentley	**388**	**240**	**3,171**	**27**	**14**
Michael Scarnecchia	51	29	353	4	0

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD
Rico Dowdle	**123**	**654**	**5.3**	**4**
Mon Denson	**86**	**432**	**5.0**	**2**
Ty'Son Williams	70	328	4.7	4
A.J. Turner	**46**	**294**	**6.4**	**2**

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Deebo Samuel	62	882	14.2	11
Bryan Edwards	**55**	**846**	**15.4**	**7**
Shi Smith	**45**	**673**	**15.0**	**4**
Josh Vann	**18**	**118**	**6.6**	**1**

KICKING: **Parker White, 13-16 FGs, 84 points**

TACKLES: **T.J. Brunson, 106; Sherrod Greene, 73**

SACKS: **Javon Kinlaw, 4.5**

INTERCEPTIONS: Rashad Fenton, 3

Returning Players in **Bold**

SCOUTING THE GAMECOCKS

OPPOSING COACHES SIZE UP SOUTH CAROLINA

"This is the season where we're going to figure out how good Will Muschamp can make this program. A lot of us thought it would be last year, but I don't know if defensively they were where they needed to be. ... They've been injured a lot, but especially in the stretch last season. That's the biggest unknown this season for them, just to stay healthy. ... You've got one of the most experienced quarterbacks in the league with Jake Bentley and a good core on the offensive line. They've got to take advantage of that. What hurts them is losing Deebo (Samuel) and not having a run game. There's no one on their roster at wideout like Deebo. (Quarterbacks coach) Dan Werner is a good fit for Bentley, he's really changed their passing game, and I think he gets what Will wants to do there. They just need better running backs. ... The secondary is really thin. That's gotta piss Will off, because they've brought in some top guys in the front these last few years. The five-star lineman they signed (Zacch Pickens) could start right away; that was a big get for them. They're really talented up front. If Javon Kinlaw returns healthy he's a hell of a force. But they weren't that tough against the run at all — you could sort of impose your will on them. ... Overall, they're a talented team that's built really well in recruiting; you just haven't seen it all come together quite yet."

Tennessee **Volunteers**

National Forecast: **47** • SEC East Prediction: **5** • Projected Record: **7-5, 3-5 SEC**

Jarrett Guarantano

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Jeremy Pruitt
Record at School: 5-7 (1 year)
Career Record: 5-7 (1 year)
Offensive Coordinator: Jim Chaney
Defensive Coordinators: Derrick Ansley, Chris Rumph
Location: Knoxville, TN
Stadium: Neyland Stadium (102,038)

KEY VOLUNTEERS

JARRETT GUARANTANO, QB The second-year starter finished 2018 with 12 touchdown passes and just three interceptions.

MARQUEZ CALLAWAY, WR The senior is expected to be the Vols' top target in 2019 after leading the team in receiving yards last season.

NIGEL WARRIOR, S Has yet to live up to lofty expectations, but he hopes 2019 resembles 2017, when he had 83 tackles, three forced fumbles, an interception and a sack.

KEY LOSSES

KYLE PHILLIPS, DL Phillips finished 2018 with 56 tackles, five sacks, and an interception returned for a touchdown against Alabama.

SHY TUTTLE, DL Battled injuries throughout his Tennessee career, but he finished his senior season with 33 tackles and an interception.

KELLER CHRYST, QB The graduate transfer was a stabilizing presence as Guarantano battled injuries throughout the season.

RISING STAR

Sophomore cornerback **BRYCE THOMPSON** is looking to build on a Freshman All-America season in 2018. He finished with a team-high three interceptions, seven pass break-ups, 34 tackles and four tackles for a loss.

After a disastrous 2017 season that resulted in the firing of Butch Jones and a chaotic coaching search, there was nowhere to go but up for Jeremy Pruitt in his first season in Knoxville. Two wins last season over ranked opponents (Auburn and Kentucky) should give Vols fans hope for 2019, but the more important developments occurred in the offseason with a top-15 recruiting class and the additions of new offensive coordinator Jim Chaney and wide receivers coach and Tennessee legend Tee Martin.

OFFENSE The Vols' offense behind QB Jarrett Guarantano showed potential in wins over Auburn (30 points, 396 total yards) and Kentucky (24 points, 412 total yards) but was mostly inept throughout the SEC schedule.

Enter Chaney. In 2018, Chaney led a Georgia offense that ranked second in the SEC in scoring (37.9 ppg), with quarterback Jake Fromm passing for more than 2,700 yards. The greatest challenge for Chaney will be to maximize Guarantano's potential, assuming that the holes in the offensive line have been addressed.

Depth at quarterback will be an area of concern with the loss of graduate transfer Keller Chryst. The Vols do not have another scholarship quarterback on the roster who has taken a snap in a college game.

The greatest priority heading into the 2019 season was strengthening the Tennessee offensive line, which left Guarantano running for his life for much of last season. This focus was clear during the early signing period — the Vols inked coveted recruits Darnell Wright and Wanya Morris, whom many recruiting experts consider two of the top offensive linemen in the country.

The health of star offensive tackle and rising junior Trey Smith will play a major factor in what Chaney and offensive line coach Will Friend are able to do in 2019. Smith has been a dominant left tackle for the Vols, but blood clots in his lungs have continually sidelined him for much of his time in Knoxville.

At wide receiver, senior Marquez Callaway is the obvious choice as the Vols' downfield threat, joined by returning playmaker Jauan Jennings. Josh Palmer is a returning starter as well and is expected to make a jump from his 23 receptions, 484 yards and two touchdowns.

A wild card for the success of this offense: Can rising senior Dominick Wood-Anderson live up to the potential that made him one of the most sought-after tight ends in the country out of junior college?

The Vols boast a stable of running backs heading into 2019, but junior Ty Chandler emerged last season as the featured back. Chandler's big-play potential and his pass-catching abilities out of the backfield make him the clear favorite to carry the bulk of the workload. The question is whether incoming freshman Eric Gray will emerge as a No. 2 playmaker in the backfield. Junior Tim Jordan will likely compete for that role as well, hoping that his 118-yard performance against West Virginia in the 2018 season opener wasn't a fluke.

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	Georgia State
Sept.	7	BYU
Sept.	14	Chattanooga
Sept.	21	at Florida
Oct.	5	Georgia
Oct.	12	Mississippi State
Oct.	19	at Alabama
Oct.	26	South Carolina
Nov.	2	UAB
Nov.	9	at Kentucky
Nov.	23	at Missouri
Nov.	30	Vanderbilt

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 5-7, 2-6 SEC

Sept.	1	vs. West Virginia #	L	14-40
Sept.	8	East Tennessee State	W	59-3
Sept.	15	UTEP	W	24-0
Sept.	22	Florida	L	21-47
Sept.	29	at Georgia	L	12-38
Oct.	13	at Auburn	W	30-24
Oct.	20	Alabama	L	21-58
Oct.	27	at South Carolina	L	24-27
Nov.	3	Charlotte	W	14-3
Nov.	10	Kentucky	W	24-7
Nov.	17	Missouri	L	17-50
Nov.	24	at Vanderbilt	L	13-38

#Charlotte

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	SEC	NATIONAL
Scoring	22.8 ppg	13	108
Rushing	129.1 ypg	14	114
Passing	196.4 ypg	11	97
Total	325.5 ypg	14	122
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**SEC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	27.9 ppg	12	77
Rushing	154.5 ypg	9	52
Passing	222.9 ypg	8	60
Total	377.4 ypg	9	49
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**SEC**	**NATIONAL**
-1	-0.08	11	73

2019 RECRUITS

1. Darnell Wright, OT, Huntington, WV
2. Wanya Morris, OT, Loganville, GA
3. Henry To'oto'o, LB, Pittsburg, CA
4. Quavaris Crouch, ATH, Charlotte, NC
5. Ramel Keyton, WR, Marietta, GA
6. Jaylen McCollough, S, Powder Springs, GA
7. Eric Gray, RB, Memphis, TN
8. Tyus Fields, CB, Cornelius, NC
9. Jackson Lampley, OG, Nashville, TN
10. Anthony Harris, S, Havelock, NC
11. Roman Harrison, LB, Bainbridge, GA
12. Jackson Lowe, TE, Cartersville, GA
13. Savion Williams, DT, Upper Marlboro, MD*
14. Melvin McBride, OG, Memphis, TN
15. Brian Maurer, QB, Ocala, FL
16. Aaron Beasley, ATH, Franklin, GA
17. Warren Burrell, CB, Suwanee, GA
18. Elijah Simmons, DT, Nashville, TN
19. Darel Middleton, DT, Oak Ridge, TN*
20. Sean Brown, TE, Rome, GA
21. Chris Akporoghene, OT, Seymour, TN
22. Jerrod Means, WR, Hampton, GA

*junior college transfer

Recruits ranked according to the 247SportsComposite

Joe Robbins

ADVANCED STATS

5 Factors: College Football's Most Important Stats

Field Position[1]		Rank
Offense	29.3	86
Defense	29.4	66
Margin	**0.0**	**76**

Efficiency[2]		Rank
Offense	38.4%	106
Defense	47.0%	115
Margin	**-8.6%**	**120**

Explosiveness[3]		Rank
Offense	5.5	90
Defense	5.7	67
Margin	**-0.2**	**88**

Finishing Drives[4]		Rank
Offense	4.6	68
Defense	4.9	97
Margin	**-0.3**	**90**

Adjusted TO Margin[5]		Rank
Projected	-3.3	99
Actual	-1	72
Margin	**+2.3**	**44**

KEY: 1-Average starting field position by yard line; **2**-Rate of successful plays (gaining 50% of necessary yards on 1st down, 70% on 2nd down, 100% on 3rd down); **3**-Explosiveness=yards per play; **4**-Points per trip inside 40-yard line; **5**-TO margin accounting for "luck" • Advanced stats provided by Bill Connelly of SB Nation

NUMBERS TO KNOW

33

Step one for new offensive coordinator Jim Chaney is to improve the ground game. Tennessee runners got stuffed at or behind the line on 33 percent of non-sack carries, easily the most in FBS.

38.4/47.0

Tennessee enjoyed just a 38.4 percent success rate (percentage of plays that gained at least 50 percent of necessary yardage on first down, 70 percent on second or 100 percent on third or fourth) on offense, ranking 106th in FBS, and allowed 47.0 percent (115th).

2.5

Even with dreadful inefficiency problems, the Vols showed hints of explosiveness: They averaged 2.5 gains per game of 30-plus yards (34th in FBS), 1.9 through the air (29th). Just imagine if they can better avoid three-and-outs.

DEFENSE While the offensive line is the Vols' greatest area of focus, the defensive line has suffered the most turnover. Pruitt will need to replace four starters who accounted for 150 tackles, nine sacks and 15.5 tackles for a loss. Tennessee could get production from top-ranked junior college defensive tackle Savion Williams, as well as Emmit Gooden, who is the only returning defensive lineman who had more than 13 tackles last season. This, however, will likely be the team's weakest area heading into the season.

The Vols come into the season deep at the linebacker position as the defense continues its transition to the 3-4. Returning starters Daniel Bituli and Darrell Taylor will be locks to play major roles. Pruitt also won on the recruiting trail with highly coveted linebackers Quavaris Crouch and Henry To'oto'o. One of the biggest questions to watch coming out of fall camp will be if Crouch will compete for one of the two remaining starting positions that are up for grabs.

The secondary is arguably the Vols' strongest unit. Sophomore cornerback Bryce Thompson earned Freshman All-America honors in 2018 and could emerge as the top defensive player on the team. Tennessee will also feature returning starters Alontae Taylor, Baylen Buchanan and Nigel Warrior.

SPECIALISTS Junior placekicker Brent Cimaglia finished 2018 with 77 percent field goal accuracy (10-of-13), with just one miss inside 40 yards, and punter Joe Doyle consistently kept return yardage to a minimum. The Vols did not allow a kickoff or punt return for a TD last season.

Callaway is expected to be the punt returner again in 2019, after he returned a punt for a touchdown against Charlotte. However, there's less certainty regarding who will return kickoffs, which was the only area where Tennessee struggled on special teams. Chandler and Thompson are the most likely options for Pruitt.

FINAL ANALYSIS Pruitt's rebuild of the Vols program is still a work in progress, but the addition of Chaney and Martin to the coaching staff, along with an improved offensive line, should put Tennessee back in a bowl game for the first time since 2016. That won't necessarily placate the Vols' rabid fan base, but it's a step in the right direction.

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (8)

WR	1	**Marquez Callaway (Sr.)**	80	Ramel Keyton (Fr.)
WR	5	**Josh Palmer (Jr.)**	10	Tyler Byrd (Sr.)
WR	15	**Jauan Jennings (Sr.)**	11	Jordan Murphy (Jr.)
LT	64	Wanya Morris (Fr.)	68	Marcus Tatum (Jr.)
LG	58	**Jahmir Johnson (Jr.)**	75	Jerome Carvin (So.)
C	55	Brandon Kennedy (Sr.)	70	**Ryan Johnson (Jr.)**
RG	57	Nathan Niehaus (Jr.)		Jackson Lampley (Fr.)
RT		Darnell Wright (Fr.)	77	Chris Akporoghene (Fr.)
TE	4	**Dominick Wood-Anderson (Sr.)**	82	Jackson Lowe (Fr.)
QB	2	**Jarrett Guarantano (Jr.)**	12	J.T. Shrout (Fr.)
RB	8	**Ty Chandler (Jr.)**	9	Tim Jordan (Jr.)

DEFENSE (7)

Returning Starters in Bold

DE		Savion Williams (So.)		Darel Middleton (Fr.)
NT	93	Emmit Gooden (Sr.)	54	Kingston Harris (Fr.)
DE	99	John Mincey (So.)	94	Matthew Butler (Jr.)
OLB	19	**Darrell Taylor (Sr.)**		Roman Harrison (Fr.)
ILB	35	**Daniel Bituli (Sr.)**	6	J.J. Peterson (Fr.)
ILB	23	Will Ignont (Jr.	34	**Darrin Kirkland Jr. (Sr.)**
OLB	13	Deandre Johnson (Jr.)	95	Kivon Bennett (So.)
CB	20	**Bryce Thompson (So.)**	28	**Baylen Buchanan (Sr.)**
CB	2	**Alontae Taylor (So.)**	17	Tyus Fields (Fr.)
S	18	**Nigel Warrior (Sr.)**	22	Jaylen McCollough (Fr.)
S	25	Trevon Flowers (So.)	29	Brandon Davis (Fr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	42	Brent Cimaglia (Jr.)	KR	8	Ty Chandler (Jr.)
P	47	Joe Doyle (So.)	PR	1	Marquez Callaway (Sr.)

2018 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Jarrett Guarantano	**246**	**153**	**1,907**	**12**	**3**
Keller Chryst	51	23	450	3	2

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD
Ty Chandler	**115**	**630**	**5.5**	**4**
Tim Jordan	**132**	**522**	**4.0**	**3**
Madre London	42	206	4.9	3
Jeremy Banks	**52**	**185**	**3.6**	**3**

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Marquez Callaway	**37**	**592**	**16.0**	**2**
Jauan Jennings	**30**	**438**	**14.6**	**3**
Josh Palmer	**23**	**484**	**21.0**	**2**
Ty Chandler	**19**	**183**	**9.6**	**3**

KICKING: **Brent Cimaglia, 10-13 FGs, 61 points**

TACKLES: **Daniel Bituli, 79; Nigel Warrior, 64**

SACKS: **Darrell Taylor, 8.0**

INTERCEPTIONS: **Bryce Thompson, 3**

Returning Players in **Bold**

SCOUTING THE VOLUNTEERS

OPPOSING COACHES SIZE UP TENNESSEE

"Jarrett Guarantano is a longtime starter who has been through it with that program. Combine him with Jim Chaney, a veteran play caller who knows the program and the roster, and in the second year of Jeremy Pruitt's culture they should be better. The standout position group here is at wide receiver. Marquez Callaway and Josh Palmer should help them build out something on the outside. Jauan Jennings coming back is big. They have a lot of athleticism on offense, they just didn't know how to utilize their skill guys. There is no reason that offense was so bad last year. I know the line wasn't good, but they have players. … Secondary is an obvious strength; they were playing freshman corners last year and now those guys are back. They run a lot of stuff out of the nickel, too, so they'll be able to do even more this year. Butch Jones did a better job recruiting than what they're telling media. The players he brought in are still playing the bulk of the time, and not a lot of the Pruitt recruits have broken past them on the depth chart, though that could change this year. They've recruited well so far for the system Jeremy wants. They just need to get to a bowl this year and beat Vanderbilt and Missouri and the conference teams who aren't as talented on their rosters. Just show that the plan is working long term."

Vanderbilt **Commodores**

National Forecast: **50** • SEC East Prediction: **7** • Projected Record: **5-7, 2-6 SEC**

Ke'Shawn Vaughn

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Derek Mason
Record at School: 24-38 (5 years)
Career Record: 24-38 (5 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Gerry Gdowski
Defensive Coordinator: Jason Tarver
Location: Nashville, TN
Stadium: Vanderbilt Stadium (40,550)

KEY COMMODORES

KE'SHAWN VAUGHN, RB Led the SEC with 7.9 ypc and had 10 carries of 40-plus yards in 2018. No other SEC player had more than five.

KALIJA LIPSCOMB, WR Led the SEC with 87 receptions, and his nine receiving TDs were the most by a Vanderbilt player since 2005.

JARED PINKNEY, TE Broke out as a fourth-year junior, catching 50 passes (most in the SEC by a tight end) for a healthy 15.5-yard average.

KEY LOSSES

KYLE SHURMUR, QB Set school records for yards passing (8,865) and touchdown passes (64); went 3–1 as a starter vs. Tennessee.

JOEJUAN WILLIAMS, CB Shutdown corner enjoyed stellar junior season and left school with one season of eligibility remaining.

LADARIUS WILEY, S Started 32 games over his final three seasons, providing toughness and leadership.

RISING STAR

TYLER STEEN signed with Vanderbilt as an O-lineman but was forced into action in three games on defense as a true freshman last fall to address some depth issues. He impressed offensive coaches during bowl practice and will enter fall as the projected starter at right tackle.

The Derek Mason era checks several important boxes: Vanderbilt has been to a bowl game twice in the past three seasons; the school's 17 wins over that stretch are the third most in a three-year period since the 1970s; and the Commodores have won three straight against rival Tennessee — something that had not happened since the 1920s. There are, however, a few troubling signs: Mason has yet to record a winning season (he is 24–38 overall), and the defense — his area of expertise — has regressed in each of the past two years after ranking sixth in the SEC in 2016.

But the pros have been enough to outweigh the cons, at least in the eyes of the administration. Mason was awarded a contract extension in February that will keep him in charge for the foreseeable future.

OFFENSE Intrigue was added to the battle to replace Kyle Shurmur — the school's career passing leader — when Riley Neal enrolled at Vanderbilt in January as a grad transfer. Neal completed 60 percent of his passes and threw for 7,393 yards while starting 32 games at Ball State. Neal will have to hold off Deuce Wallace, a fourth-year junior who rejoined the team in the spring after missing the 2018 season due to a suspension. Wallace and Neal have a similar skill set. Wallace has more experience in Vanderbilt's system; Neal has the edge in actual game action.

The new starting quarterback will be complemented by arguably the finest collection of skill position talent at Vanderbilt in decades — headlined by running back Ke'Shawn Vaughn, wide receiver Kalija Lipscomb and tight end Jared Pinkney.

Vaughn, a Nashville native who transferred to Vanderbilt after two seasons at Illinois, emerged as one of the most explosive players in college football in the second half of the season. In his final four full games — he went down with an injury in the first quarter against Tennessee — Vaughn rushed for 724 yards (on a 9.2-yard average) and seven touchdowns. Lipscomb caught 87 passes, though he did see his average drop from 16.5 yards as a sophomore to 10.5 last fall with only two catches of 20-plus yards. Pinkney, perhaps the team's top NFL prospect, was one of two tight ends nationally with at least 50 receptions and a 15.0-yard average.

Lipscomb and Pinkney will no doubt be the primary targets, but Vanderbilt boasts a nice crop of young pass catchers in sophomores C.J. Bolar and Amir Abdur-Rahman and redshirt freshman Cam Johnson. Each has the ability to be an SEC-caliber wideout.

The weapons won't be as effective, though, if the offensive line struggles. "This is a critical position for us," Mason says of a unit that must replace three players who started a combined 34 games in 2018.

DEFENSE Vanderbilt improved its scoring defense from 31.3 points per game in 2017 to 26.6 last season — the first under coordinator Jason Tarver — but ranked in the bottom three of the SEC in run defense, total de-

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	Georgia
Sept.	7	at Purdue
Sept.	21	LSU
Sept.	28	Northern Illinois
Oct.	5	at Ole Miss
Oct.	12	UNLV
Oct.	19	Missouri
Nov.	2	at South Carolina
Nov.	9	at Florida
Nov.	16	Kentucky
Nov.	23	East Tennessee State
Nov.	30	at Tennessee

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 6-7, 3-5 SEC

Sept.	1	Middle Tennessee	W	35-7
Sept.	8	Nevada	W	41-10
Sept.	15	at Notre Dame	L	17-22
Sept.	22	South Carolina	L	14-37
Sept.	29	Tennessee State	W	31-27
Oct.	6	at Georgia	L	13-41
Oct.	13	Florida	L	27-37
Oct.	20	at Kentucky	L	7-14
Oct.	27	at Arkansas	W	45-31
Nov.	10	at Missouri	L	28-33
Nov.	17	Ole Miss (ot)	W	36-29
Nov.	24	Tennessee	W	38-13
Dec.	27	vs. Baylor #	L	38-45

#Texas Bowl

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	SEC	NATIONAL
Scoring	28.5 ppg	10	68
Rushing	167.5 ypg	9	66
Passing	243.7 ypg	6	56
Total	411.2 ypg	8	59
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**SEC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	26.6 ppg	10	60
Rushing	194.7 ypg	12	94
Passing	244.2 ypg	10	85
Total	438.9 ypg	13	99
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**SEC**	**NATIONAL**
+8	+0.62	4	20

2019 RECRUITS

1. Anfernee Orji, S, Rockwall, TX
2. Dontye Carriere-Williams, CB, Miami, FL*
3. Daevion Davis, DT, Madison, AL
4. Derek Green, DT, Jacksonville, NC
5. Justin Harris, S, Attalla, AL
6. Devin Boddie Jr., WR, Memphis, TN
7. Jayden Harrison, WR, Antioch, TN
8. Keyon Brooks, RB, Powder Springs, GA
9. Brayden Bapst, OT, Washington, DC
10. Christian James, DE, Germantown, TN
11. Jamil Muhammad, QB, Madison, AL
12. Joel DeCoursey, TE, Zionsville, IN
13. Jaylen Mahoney, CB, Rock Hill, SC
14. Donald Fitzgerald, OT, Nashville, TN
15. Julian Hernandez, OG, Davie, FL
16. Lashawn Paulino-Bell, DE, Tamarac, FL*
17. Nate Clifton, DL, Nashville, TN
18. JR Tran-Reno, RB, Birmingham, AL
19. Justin Ball, TE, Glenn Dale, MD
20. Gabe Jeudy, CB, Charlotte, NC
21. Brandon Maddox, DT, North Augusta, SC*
22. Jared Wheatley, P, Matthews, NC

*junior college transfer

Recruits ranked according to the 247SportsComposite

ADVANCED STATS

5 Factors: College Football's Most Important Stats

Field Position[1]		Rank
Offense	30.2	53
Defense	26.6	8
Margin	**+3.6**	**30**

Efficiency[2]		Rank
Offense	43.5%	47
Defense	46.9%	114
Margin	**-3.4%**	**95**

Explosiveness[3]		Rank
Offense	6.3	21
Defense	6.1	103
Margin	**+0.1**	**71**

Finishing Drives[4]		Rank
Offense	4.3	94
Defense	4.4	56
Margin	**-0.1**	**77**

Adjusted TO Margin[5]		Rank
Projected	5.1	31
Actual	8	20
Margin	**+2.9**	**39**

KEY: 1-Average starting field position by yard line; **2**-Rate of successful plays (gaining 50% of necessary yards on 1st down, 70% on 2nd down, 100% on 3rd down); **3**-Explosiveness=yards per play; **4**-Points per trip inside 40-yard line; **5**-TO margin accounting for "luck" • Advanced stats provided by Bill Connelly of SB Nation

NUMBERS TO KNOW

6.4

Opponents' average distance to go on third downs plummeted from 7.6 (22nd in FBS) to 6.4 (124th). Not surprisingly, the Commodores' conversion rate allowed soared from 37.4 percent (53rd) to 45.6 (117th).

6.3/4.3

The offense took a step forward in 2018, improving from 5.6 yards per play in 2017 (66th in FBS) to 6.3 (21st). Unfortunately, you've still got to finish: Vanderbilt averaged 4.3 points per scoring opportunity (first downs inside the opponent's 40), 94th in FBS and last in the SEC.

40+

Ke'Shawn Vaughn ripped off 10 rushes of 40-plus yards in 2018. Only Memphis' Darrell Henderson had more. Just imagine what he could have done had he been the Commodores' go-to rusher for more than half a season.

fense and third down stops. Mason believes the struggles on defense the last few years can be attributed to a lack of size and depth on the line. And he believes those issues have been addressed through player development and recruiting — with true freshmen, junior college transfers and grad transfers. "We just didn't have enough size or depth to hold up," Mason says. "We've added some big bodies. We just have more depth."

There are some familiar names back on the defensive line — Dayo Odeyingbo, Drew Birchmeier and Cameron Tidd — but newcomers such as Eddie Zinn-Turner (grad transfer), Brandon Maddox (junior college transfer) and Daevion Davis (true freshman) will be critical to changing the fortunes of the defense.

Jordan Griffin and Josh Smith enjoyed solid senior seasons in 2018, but there hasn't been a true difference-maker at linebacker at Vanderbilt in the past few years. A couple of young inside backers could emerge as the next standouts at the position — sophomores Dimitri Moore (second on the team with 84 tackles in '18) and Alston Orji (the top recruit in the '18 signing class).

Here's the question for the Vanderbilt secondary: Is it better to have more depth (like the Dores will have in 2019) or a couple of stars (such as they did last fall in corner Joejuan Williams and safety LaDarius Wiley)? Mason favors depth. "We are bigger and longer and have more depth than we've ever had," he says. Junior college transfer Dontye Carriere-Williams (formerly of Wisconsin) is a likely starter at one corner spot.

SPECIALISTS Senior Ryley Guay struggled in his first season as the Commodores' placekicker, making only 13-of-22 field goals, with three misses inside 30 yards. Walk-on Harrison Smith and incoming freshman Jared Wheatley will battle for the punting duties. Justice Shelton-Mosley, a grad transfer from Harvard, should ignite the return game.

FINAL ANALYSIS External expectations might be low due to the loss of Shurmur and the ongoing struggles of the defense, but there is a quiet confidence in the building — due in large part to the returning firepower on offense — that this will be the best team Mason has fielded. Now it's time to prove it.

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (7)

WR	16	**Kalija Lipscomb (Sr.)**	87	Amir Abdur-Rahman (So.)
WR	83	**C.J. Bolar (So.)**	7	Cam Johnson (Fr.)
WR	19	**Chris Pierce (Jr.)**	4	Donaven Tennyson (Sr.)
LT	77	**Devin Cochran (Jr.)**	73	Johnathan Stewart (So.)
LG	74	**Cole Clemens (Jr.)**	50	Sean McMoore (Jr.)
C	63	Grant Miller (So.)	72	Dan Dawkins (Fr.)
RG	56	Saige Young (Sr.)		Rowan Godwin (Sr.)
RT	54	Tyler Steen (Fr.)	78	Bryce Bailey (So.)
TE	80	**Jared Pinkney (Sr.)**	86	Ben Bresnahan (Fr.)
QB	6	Riley Neal (Sr.)	2	Deuce Wallace (Jr.)
RB	5	**Ke'Shawn Vaughn (Sr.)**	32	Jamauri Wakefield (Jr.)

DEFENSE (4)

Returning Starters in Bold

DL	10	**Dayo Odeyingbo (Jr.)**	94	Rutger Reitmaier (So.)
DL	91	**Drew Birchmeier (Jr.)**		Eddie Zinn-Turner (Sr.)
DL	90	Cameron Tidd (Jr.)	56	Brandon Maddox (So.)
OLB	9	Caleb Peart (Sr.)	41	Elijah McAllister (So.)
ILB	24	Alston Orji (So.)	12	Brayden DeVault-Smith (So.)
ILB	7	**Dimitri Moore (So.)**	17	Feleti Afemui (So.)
OLB	42	Kenny Hebert (Jr.)		Lashawn Paulino-Bell (Jr.)
CB	5	Dontye Carriere-Williams (Jr.)	28	Allan George (So.)
CB	4	Randall Haynie (So.)		Cameron Watkins (Sr.)
S	2	**Frank Coppet (Jr.)**	14	Max Worship (So.)
S	3	Tae Daley (Jr.)	13	Brendon Harris (So.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	98	Ryley Guay (Sr.)	**KR**	32	Jamauri Wakefield (Jr.)
P	95	Harrison Smith (So.)	**PR**		Justice Shelton-Mosley (Sr.)

2018 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Kyle Shurmur	406	254	3,130	24	6
Mo Hasan	**6**	**4**	**38**	**0**	**0**

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD
Ke'Shawn Vaughn	**157**	**1,244**	**7.9**	**12**
Khari Blasingame	96	401	4.2	5
Jamauri Wakefield	**78**	**353**	**4.5**	**2**

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Kalija Lipscomb	**87**	**916**	**10.5**	**9**
Jared Pinkney	**50**	**774**	**15.5**	**7**
C.J. Bolar	**34**	**440**	**12.9**	**2**
Khari Blasingame	25	320	12.8	1
Ke'Shawn Vaughn	**13**	**170**	**13.1**	**2**

KICKING: **Ryley Guay 13-22 FGs, 86 points**

TACKLES: Jordan Griffin, 119; **Dimitri Moore, 84**

SACKS: **Kenny Hebert, 4.0**

INTERCEPTIONS: Joejuan Williams, 4

Returning Players in **Bold**

SCOUTING THE COMMODORES

OPPOSING COACHES SIZE UP VANDERBILT

"What's the offense going to look like? Are they confident about this kid from Ball State (Riley Neal) at quarterback? He's probably the most talented guy they've got if he can get comfortable in their system. Their running back (Ke'Shawn Vaughn) could be one of the best in the league this year. You like everything you see when he runs the ball. He's as mean as he is disciplined. You love seeing that. The tight end (Jared Pinkney) is a really great player. So they've got some chances to help the QB. I expect they'll try to slow it down. They've lost some of the offensive line so they're lacking experience, but they have enough depth to get by. Replacing Kyle Shurmur and (offensive coordinator) Andy Ludwig are the biggest things they need to address. … Their defense could be even better this year without most of those guys coming back. Derek Mason stays involved on the defense so much that you know they're always going to play above their ability. They'll be really young up front, but we expect them to be nasty every year. The secondary could struggle for a while; a guy like Joejuan Williams will be really hard to replace. (Defensive coordinator) Jason (Tarver) does a great job, too. That's as solid a group of defensive coaches as you can find. … The problem for Vanderbilt as a program is that they're good but never great, and the division keeps getting better."

Alabama **Crimson Tide**

National Forecast: **1** • SEC West Prediction: **1** • Projected Record: **13-0, 8-0 SEC**

Tua Tagovailoa

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Nick Saban
Record at School: 146-21 (12 years)
Career Record: 237-63-1 (23 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Steve Sarkisian
Defensive Coordinator: Pete Golding
Location: Tuscaloosa, AL
Stadium: Bryant-Denny Stadium (101,821)

KEY CRIMSON TIDE

TUA TAGOVAILOA, QB The Heisman runner-up was spectacular in his first season as the starter, throwing for just under 4,000 yards and 43 touchdowns.

JERRY JEUDY, WR A touchdown machine mixing speed and precise route running.

NAJEE HARRIS, RB After two years in a reserve role, Harris should emerge as one of the most productive running backs in the nation.

KEY LOSSES

QUINNEN WILLIAMS, DT One of the nation's best players changed the entire dynamic of offensive line schemes.

IRV SMITH JR., TE Smith was a nightmare for defenses, with his ability to run routes and make difficult catches.

JONAH WILLIAMS, OT A three-year starter who never missed a game, Williams knew the offense as well as any player on the team.

RISING STAR

Junior **BRIAN ROBINSON JR.** had to wait his turn behind NFL-caliber running backs for two years before the depth chart cleared up. A short-yardage back previously, the local product figures to be in the rotation after running for 272 yards on 63 attempts last season.

A new reality faces Alabama after what happened in January. Its decade-long stranglehold on college football has loosened, with Clemson now staking claim to the unofficial title as the best program in the nation. That 44–16 national title dethroning led to changes in the Alabama football complex, with seven new coaches stepping into roles for 2019. It also changed the mindset of everyone who returned, since no Nick Saban-coached Alabama team had lost a game by more than 14 points during his time in Tuscaloosa. Regaining the "Alabama Factor" has been a talking point of Saban's during the offseason.

OFFENSE A good chunk of the offensive production that made last year's team so electrifying is back. It starts with Heisman runner-up Tua Tagovailoa at quarterback and extends to what could be the nation's top collection of wide receivers. The questions will be in the running game and up front, but a stockpile of five-star recruits should be able to fill the gaps.

All eyes will be on Tagovailoa to see how he'll follow a dream season that ended on a down note. He rewrote Alabama's passing record book with 3,966 yards and 43 touchdowns, playing an exciting brand of offense not previously seen in Tuscaloosa. His instincts and ability to thread a pass through traffic should again put him in the conversation for the nation's top player. Having so many receivers back will also help. Jerry Jeudy took the step toward Julio Jones/Amari Cooper/Calvin Ridley territory after averaging 19.3 yards per catch and scoring 14 touchdowns. His ability to stretch a defense will make him one of the top receivers nationally again in 2019. The speed of Henry Ruggs III and Jaylen Waddle also creates matchup problem, and DeVonta Smith is one of the team's most consistent players.

This might sound familiar: Alabama lost some key weapons at running back but will still boast one of the top backfields in the nation. With Damien Harris and Josh Jacobs gone to the NFL, it's time for Najee Harris and Brian Robinson Jr. to take over. Harris was the third option off the bench last year and showed the speed and power that made him one of the nation's top prospects two years ago. He led the team with 6.7 yards per rushing attempt (despite not having a run longer than 32 yards) and is poised for a big junior season. Robinson saw time late in blowout wins and was part of the kickoff return tandem with Jacobs. True freshman Trey Sanders, a five-star recruit, will be hard to keep off the field.

Up front, Alex Leatherwood is moving back to his natural position at left tackle while battles continue for both guard positions and center.

DEFENSE There will be some considerable holes to fill with key pieces like Quinnen Williams, Mack Wilson and Deionte Thompson opting for the NFL over another season at Alabama. The draft has raided the Tide defense the last few years, and there are actual depth concerns starting to appear.

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	vs. Duke #
Sept.	7	New Mexico State
Sept.	14	at South Carolina
Sept.	21	Southern Miss
Sept.	28	Ole Miss
Oct.	12	at Texas A&M
Oct.	19	Tennessee
Oct.	26	Arkansas
Nov.	9	LSU
Nov.	16	at Mississippi State
Nov.	23	Western Carolina
Nov.	30	at Auburn

#Atlanta

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 14-1, 8-0 SEC

Sept.	1	vs. Louisville #	W	51-14
Sept.	8	Arkansas State	W	57-7
Sept.	15	at Ole Miss	W	62-7
Sept.	22	Texas A&M	W	45-23
Sept.	29	Louisiana	W	56-14
Oct.	6	at Arkansas	W	65-31
Oct.	13	Missouri	W	39-10
Oct.	20	at Tennessee	W	58-21
Nov.	3	at LSU	W	29-0
Nov.	10	Mississippi State	W	24-0
Nov.	17	The Citadel	W	50-17
Nov.	24	Auburn	W	52-21
Dec.	1	vs. Georgia %	W	35-28
Dec.	29	vs. Oklahoma &	W	45-34
Jan.	7	vs. Clemson $	L	16-44

#Orlando %Atlanta &CFB Playoff Semifinal
$CFB Playoff National Championship

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	SEC	NATIONAL
Scoring	45.6 ppg	1	3
Rushing	198.4 ypg	7	42
Passing	323.6 ypg	2	6
Total	522.0 ypg	1	6
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**SEC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	18.1 ppg	3	12
Rushing	121.3 ypg	3	19
Passing	198.3 ypg	5	33
Total	319.5 ypg	3	16
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**SEC**	**NATIONAL**
+6	+0.40	6	34

2019 RECRUITS

1. Antonio Alfano, DE, Colonia, NJ
2. Trey Sanders, RB, Bradenton, FL
3. Evan Neal, OT, Okeechobee, FL
4. Pierce Quick, OL, Trussville, AL
5. Jordan Battle, S, Fort Lauderdale, FL
6. Ishmael Sopsher, DT, Amite, LA
7. Justin Eboigbe, DE, Forest Park, GA
8. Amari Kight, OT, Alabaster, AL
9. Byron Young, DT, Laurel, MS
10. Shane Lee, LB, Baltimore, MD
11. DeMarcco Hellams, S, Hyattsville, MD
12. Jeffery Carter, CB, Mansfield, TX
13. Brandon Turnage, CB, Oxford, MS
14. Christian Harris, LB, Baton Rouge, LA
15. Kevin Harris II, DE, Loganville, GA
16. Marcus Banks, CB, Houston, TX
17. King Mwikuta, DE, West Point, GA
18. Braylen Ingraham, DE, Fort Lauderdale, FL
19. Darrian Dalcourt, OG, Baltimore, MD
20. Taulia Tagovailoa, QB, Alabaster, AL
21. Keilan Robinson, RB, Washington, DC
22. DJ Dale, DT, Pinson, AL
23. John Metchie, WR, Hightstown, NJ
24. Tanner Bowles, OG, Glasgow, KY
25. Jahleel Billingsley, TE, Chicago, IL
26. Paul Tyson, QB, Trussville, AL
27. Will Reichard, K, Hoover, AL

Recruits ranked according to the 247SportsComposite

Harrison McClary

ADVANCED STATS

5 Factors: College Football's Most Important Stats

Field Position[1]		Rank
Offense	31.5	26
Defense	26.7	10
Margin	**+4.8**	**15**

Efficiency[2]		Rank
Offense	56.2%	1
Defense	34.3%	6
Margin	**+22.0%**	**1**

Explosiveness[3]		Rank
Offense	7.8	2
Defense	4.9	24
Margin	**+2.9**	**2**

Finishing Drives[4]		Rank
Offense	5.3	11
Defense	4.4	50
Margin	**+0.9**	**19**

Adjusted TO Margin[5]		Rank
Projected	9.8	2
Actual	6	29
Margin	**-3.8**	**103**

KEY: 1-Average starting field position by yard line; **2**-Rate of successful plays (gaining 50% of necessary yards on 1st down, 70% on 2nd down, 100% on 3rd down); **3**-Explosiveness=yards per play; **4**-Points per trip inside 40-yard line; **5**-TO margin accounting for "luck" • Advanced stats provided by Bill Connelly of SB Nation

NUMBERS TO KNOW

5.5

Alabama's passing game exploded in 2018: The Crimson Tide not only ranked fifth nationally in completion rate (68.7 percent), but they also ranked first in passes per game of 20-plus yards (5.5). That's patently unfair.

4.9

The Bama defense allowed 4.9 yards per play in 2018. On one hand, that's perfectly fine — 24th in FBS and third in the SEC. By Bama standards, though, it's unacceptable: The Tide hadn't allowed that high an average since 2007, Nick Saban's first year in town.

34.3

Granted, the defense was as efficient as ever. The Tide allowed just a 34.3 percent success rate (percentage of plays that gained at least 50 percent of necessary yardage on first down, 70 percent on second or 100 percent on third or fourth), sixth in FBS.

This would appear to be a big year for Raekwon Davis, who lost fellow starters Williams and Isaiah Buggs on the defensive line. The 6'7" end has the strength and athleticism to take the next step this fall. It could also be an opportunity for players such as LaBryan Ray and Phidarian Mathis along with true freshmen DJ Dale and Antonio Alfano. Depth was a concern in the spring.

Similar concerns exist at middle linebacker. Dylan Moses is the only returnee with meaningful college experience at the position, with reserves like Ale Kaho, Joshua McMillon and Markail Benton competing for time at a position that's become a calling card for Alabama defenses in the Saban era. On the outside, the status of Terrell Lewis is a big question. A tall, athletic pass rusher, Lewis tore his ACL in the summer of 2018 and had a setback in the spring. Anfernee Jennings will be back for his senior season as a consistent player with considerable experience.

There's some continuity in the secondary, with Patrick Surtain II and Trevon Diggs back at cornerback and Xavier McKinney stepping into the quarterback role at safety. Shyheim Carter also appears to be in line for a job at safety while remaining an option at the Star position as the fifth defensive back in nickel and dime situations.

SPECIALISTS Last season provided perhaps the best example of what's been a continuing struggle — Tide placekickers missed a staggering nine extra points. Joseph Bulovas, who missed six of those PATs but hit a respectable 14-of-18 on field goals, is back but will be challenged by incoming freshman Will Reichard, one of the nation's top prep kickers. Reichard is also an option to punt and will battle Mike Bernier and Skyler DeLong for that position. Waddle is a major weapon on punt returns.

FINAL ANALYSIS Despite being humbled in the national title game last season, Alabama is still an elite program that expects to reach the College Football Playoff on an annual basis.

This team does have a few question marks — the offensive line, depth across the board on defense — but Alabama will once again begin the season with a No. 1 national ranking and will have its sights set on winning the sixth national title of the Saban era.

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (6)

WR	**4**	**Jerry Jeudy (Jr.)**	17	Jaylen Waddle (So.)
WR	**11**	**Henry Ruggs III (Jr.)**	3	John Metchie (Fr.)
WR	**6**	**DeVonta Smith (Jr.)**	14	Tyrell Shavers (So.)
LT	**70**	**Alex Leatherwood (Jr.)**	76	Scott Lashley (Jr.)
LG	55	Emil Ekiyor Jr. (Fr.)	73	Evan Neal (Fr.)
C	79	Chris Owens (Jr.)	50	Hunter Brannon (So.)
RG	77	Matt Womack (Sr.)	65	Deonte Brown (Jr.)
RT	**74**	**Jedrick Wills Jr. (Jr.)**	75	Tommy Brown (Fr.)
TE	87	Miller Forristall (Jr.)	20	Cameron Latu (Fr.)
QB	**13**	**Tua Tagovailoa (Jr.)**	10	Mac Jones (So.)
RB	22	Najee Harris (Jr.)	24	Brian Robinson Jr. (Jr.)

DEFENSE (7)

Returning Starters in Bold

DE	89	LaBryan Ray (Jr.)	90	Stephon Wynn Jr. (Fr.)
DT	48	Phidarian Mathis (So.)	94	DJ Dale (Fr.)
DE	**99**	**Raekwon Davis (Sr.)**	56	Antonio Alfano (Fr.)
OLB	**33**	**Anfernee Jennings (Sr.)**	9	Eyabi Anoma (So.)
ILB	**32**	**Dylan Moses (Jr.)**	42	Jaylen Moody (So.)
ILB	40	Joshua McMillon (Sr.)	35	Shane Lee (Fr.)
OLB	24	Terrell Lewis (Jr.)	4	Christopher Allen (So.)
CB	**7**	**Trevon Diggs (Sr.)**	28	Josh Jobe (So.)
CB	**2**	**Patrick Surtain II (So.)**	22	Jalyn Armour-Davis (Fr.)
S	**15**	**Xavier McKinney (Jr.)**	**5**	**Shyheim Carter (Sr.)**
S	21	Jared Mayden (Sr.)	3	Daniel Wright (So.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	16	Will Reichard (Fr.)	**KR** 24	Brian Robinson Jr. (Jr.)
P	12	Skyler DeLong (So.)	**PR** 17	Jaylen Waddle (So.)

2018 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Tua Tagovailoa	**355**	**245**	**3,966**	**43**	**6**
Jalen Hurts	70	51	765	8	2

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD
Damien Harris	150	876	5.8	9
Najee Harris	**117**	**783**	**6.7**	**4**
Josh Jacobs	120	640	5.3	11
Brian Robinson Jr.	**63**	**272**	**4.3**	**2**

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Jerry Jeudy	**68**	**1,315**	**19.3**	**14**
Henry Ruggs III	**46**	**741**	**16.1**	**11**
Jaylen Waddle	**45**	**848**	**18.8**	**7**
Irv Smith Jr.	44	710	16.1	7

KICKING: **Joseph Bulovas, 14-18 FGs, 117 points**

TACKLES: **Dylan Moses, 86**; Deionte Thompson, 79

SACKS: Isaiah Buggs, 9.5

INTERCEPTIONS: Saivion Smith, 3

Returning Players in **Bold**

SCOUTING THE CRIMSON TIDE

OPPOSING COACHES SIZE UP ALABAMA

"Maybe the best thing for this year's team was losing that national title game the way they did. They were outplayed, outcoached and got whipped on the lines. Now they're going to reload with the best roster in the league, but Nick Saban has all the motivation he needs. ... I think the coaching staff was an issue last season. The turnover at coordinator and some of those position guys, maybe Saban underestimated that impact on the players. ... They'll be a better defense this year. The secondary was freshman young, and now they're experienced. Pay attention to the competition up front; replacing Quinnen Williams will be key. LaBryan Ray is the next man up there, he'll be really good. Raekwon Davis is an absolute monster. NFL ready. ... If there's a questionable unit, and there really isn't, it might be offensive line. Jonah Williams is a first-round talent. They'll need a new center and it's a new offensive system. ... Najee Harris needs to come out strong and show he can be an actual feature back. It's his backfield. ... What can you say about Tua Tagovailoa? He plays hard, he plays hurt, he's great with pressure and competes his ass off. He's the ideal Saban quarterback. ... This is another national championship team, and they have the benefit of building off of last year's loss. They'll come out angry and focused."

Arkansas **Razorbacks**

National Forecast: **70** • SEC West Prediction: **7** • Projected Record: **5-7, 1-7 SEC**

McTelvin Agim

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Chad Morris
Record at School: 2-10 (1 year)
Career Record: 16-32 (4 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Joe Craddock
Defensive Coordinator: John Chavis
Location: Fayetteville, AR
Stadium: Reynolds Razorback Stadium (80,800)

KEY RAZORBACKS

MCTELVIN AGIM, DT Veteran can be impact standout as full-time interior guy after playing much of last year at end.

DE'JON HARRIS, LB Recorded 118 tackles en route to earning second-team All-SEC honors. Should be good to go in the fall after undergoing foot surgery in early March.

RAKEEM BOYD, TB Junior college transfer topped 100 yards three times in SEC play and averaged 6.0 yards per carry for the season.

KEY LOSSES

HJALTE FROHOLDT, LG The Great Dane was the no-doubt leader of the offensive line. Named second-team All-SEC in 2018 by the AP.

DRE GREENLAW, WLB Four-year starter added speed to the second level of the defense. Third on the team with 80 tackles last fall.

LA'MICHAEL PETTWAY, WR Tied for the team lead with 30 catches for 499 yards. Transferred with one season of eligibility remaining.

RISING STARS

Cornerback **MONTARIC BROWN** and free safety **JOE FOUCHA** are both sophomores who are expected to win starting assignments. Brown had a big spring with numerous interceptions. Foucha is a rugged hitter whose physicality can start changing the perception of the secondary.

How far away from contender status are the 2019 Arkansas Razorbacks? Based on a winless conference circuit in Chad Morris' debut season and a couple of ugly nonconference losses, it would seem like a long way.

Arkansas must get control of its turnover margin, get stronger and tougher in the trenches, add speed and more dynamic talent throughout the lineup, play tighter on special teams and upgrade its quarterback play to start winning games in the SEC West. The Razorbacks should make at least marginal improvement in each of those areas, but they will likely have to battle to achieve bowl eligibility before they can start dreaming about New Year's Day games.

The Razorbacks added a top-25 class of prospects during a roster overhaul as they try to pack in quality depth.

OFFENSE There was significant turnover at quarterback, with Morris and offensive coordinator Joe Craddock welcoming in a former pupil as Ty Storey and Cole Kelley, who combined for 11 starts in 2018, transferred out.

Former SMU quarterback Ben Hicks holds the inside position for the starting job. Hicks passed for 9,081 yards, with 71 touchdowns and 34 interceptions in three seasons at SMU. His knowledge of the offense and ability to serve as an instructor on and off the field for the rest of the unit hold great value and should lead to more cohesive offensive performance for a unit that ranked 118th in the nation in total offense (335.7 ypg) and 114th in scoring (21.7 ppg).

The other top candidates are redshirt freshman Connor Noland, who pitched for the Hogs' baseball team in the spring, and Texas A&M graduate transfer Nick Starkel.

Top tailbacks Rakeem Boyd and Devwah Whaley missed most of spring drills, giving the bulk of the top reps to junior Chase Hayden, who had a solid freshman season in 2017. That trio should give the Razorbacks a potent rushing attack.

Deon Stewart, slot man De'Vion Warren, Michael Woods and 6'5" true freshman Trey Knox are likely to become the top targets, with speedster Jordan Jones, Koilan Jackson and a few others in the mix. The group has to get better at creating space and become better blockers. Cheyenne O'Grady has already established himself as one of the better pass-catching tight ends in the country, but his blocking needs improvement.

Injuries hampered the Hogs' offensive line last year. Left tackle Colton Jackson and center Ty Clary are the lone returning starters. Jackson was having a good spring before a minor knee injury cost him the last week and a half. Austin Capps, Shane Clenin and Ryan Winkel will vie for reps at guard. Dalton Wagner and Noah Gatlin are the top options at right tackle. Junior college transfers Myron Cunningham and Chibueze Nwanna are expected to contribute. Improved play from this unit is imperative for the Morris offense to bloom in Year 2.

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	Portland State
Sept.	7	at Ole Miss
Sept.	14	Colorado State
Sept.	21	San Jose State
Sept.	28	vs. Texas A&M #
Oct.	12	at Kentucky
Oct.	19	Auburn
Oct.	26	at Alabama
Nov.	2	Mississippi State
Nov.	9	Western Kentucky
Nov.	23	at LSU
Nov.	30	vs. Missouri %

#Arlington, TX %Little Rock, AR

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 2-10, 0-8 SEC

Sept.	1	Eastern Illinois	W	55-20
Sept.	8	at Colorado State	L	27-34
Sept.	15	North Texas	L	17-44
Sept.	22	at Auburn	L	3-34
Sept.	29	vs. Texas A&M #	L	17-24
Oct.	6	Alabama	L	31-65
Oct.	13	vs. Ole Miss %	L	33-37
Oct.	20	Tulsa	W	23-0
Oct.	27	Vanderbilt	L	31-45
Nov.	10	LSU	L	17-24
Nov.	17	at Mississippi State	L	6-52
Nov.	23	at Missouri	L	0-38

#Arlington, TX %Little Rock, AR

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	SEC	NATIONAL
Scoring	21.7 ppg	14	114
Rushing	143.4 ypg	13	99
Passing	192.3 ypg	12	98
Total	335.7 ypg	13	118
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**SEC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	34.8 ppg	13	108
Rushing	167.8 ypg	11	70
Passing	245.3 ypg	11	87
Total	413.2 ypg	11	79
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**SEC**	**NATIONAL**
-10	-0.83	14	120

2019 RECRUITS

1. Treylon Burks, WR, Warren, AR
2. Hudson Henry, TE, Little Rock, AR
3. Trey Knox, WR, Murfreesboro, TN
4. Devin Bush, CB, New Orleans, LA
5. Jalen Catalon, S, Mansfield, TX
6. Collin Clay, DE, Oklahoma City, OK
7. Mataio Soli, DE, Douglasville, GA
8. KJ Jefferson, QB, Sardis, MS
9. Greg Brooks Jr., CB, Harvey, LA
10. TQ Jackson, WR, Jefferson, TX
11. Shamar Nash, WR, Memphis, TN
12. Zach Williams, DE, Little Rock, AR
13. Eric Gregory, DE, Memphis, TN
14. Ricky Stromberg, C, Tulsa, OK
15. Enoch Jackson Jr., DT, Mansfield, TX
16. Zach Zimos, OLB, Richmond, TX
17. Taurean Carter, DT, Mansfield, TX
18. Beaux Limmer, C, Tyler, TX
19. A'Montae Spivey, RB, Phenix City, AL
20. Chibueze Nwanna, OT, Hyattsville, MD*
21. Malik Chavis, DB, Rison, AR
22. Myron Cunningham, OT, Warren, OH*
23. Brady Latham, OT, Jenks, OK
24. Marcus Miller, DT, Warren, AR
25. Dylan Rathcke, OT, Baton Rouge, LA

*junior college transfer

Recruits ranked according to the 247SportsComposite

Jay Biggerstaff

ADVANCED STATS

5 Factors: College Football's Most Important Stats

Field Position[1]		Rank
Offense	26.8	119
Defense	33.4	123
Margin	**-6.6**	**127**
Efficiency[2]		**Rank**
Offense	37.7%	111
Defense	45.7%	107
Margin	**-8.0%**	**118**
Explosiveness[3]		**Rank**
Offense	5.0	118
Defense	6.0	97
Margin	**-1.0**	**110**
Finishing Drives[4]		**Rank**
Offense	4.4	83
Defense	4.5	72
Margin	**-0.1**	**76**
Adjusted TO Margin[5]		**Rank**
Projected	-5.1	114
Actual	-10	120
Margin	**-4.9**	**113**

KEY: 1-Average starting field position by yard line; **2**-Rate of successful plays (gaining 50% of necessary yards on 1st down, 70% on 2nd down, 100% on 3rd down); **3**-Explosiveness=yards per play; **4**-Points per trip inside 40-yard line; **5**-TO margin accounting for "luck" • Advanced stats provided by Bill Connelly of SB Nation

NUMBERS TO KNOW

-6.6

Arkansas had a decent special teams unit in 2018 but got destroyed in the field position battle anyway. Their field position margin of minus-6.6 yards per drive was easily the worst in the conference and fourth worst in FBS.

54.6

Arkansas passers completed just 54.6 percent of their attempts, 107th in FBS and 13th in the SEC. That's not good for any offense, but it's especially bad for a Chad Morris one.

-8.0

The Razorback offense managed a success rate (percentage of plays that gained at least 50 percent of necessary yardage on first down, 70 percent on second or 100 percent on third or fourth) of 37.7 percent and allowed 45.7 percent. That minus-8.0 percent margin was 118th in FBS.

DEFENSE Coordinator John Chavis wants the attack level to be cranked up in Year 2 of his system with the Razorbacks. His front clearly had the edge during spring while facing a constantly evolving offensive line. Having seniors in McTelvin Agim and T.J. Smith as interior linemen is a strong starting point, but edge players such as Dorian Gerald, Gabe Richardson, Jamario Bell and signee Mataio Soli must get better against the run and be more impactful pass rushers.

Middle linebacker De'Jon Harris anchors the unit after ranking third in the SEC last season with 118 tackles. The linebacking corps has been thin in recent years. Bumper Pool and Hayden Henry are in line to grab starting slots, while Grant Morgan, Andrew Parker and Giovanni LaFrance look like top options off the bench.

The Razorbacks also look to be thin in the secondary but return a handful of players with starting experience, led by junior safety Kamren Curl, sophomore cornerback Jarques McClellion and nickel D'Vone McClure. When the unit had to cover long, there were too many breakdowns a year ago, and tackling must improve. Adding speed and playing faster are critical. Sophomores Montaric "Buster" Brown and Joe Foucha look primed to win starting jobs at cornerback and free safety, respectively. Depth looks to be youth driven, with players such as Myles Mason, LaDarrius Bishop and true freshmen Greg Brooks Jr. and Devin Bush likely to be the top backups.

SPECIALISTS The return of senior Connor Limpert is a strong start for the kicking units, which had their struggles a year ago, including the embarrassing psych job 90-yard punt return touchdown by North Texas that got hyped all over the Internet. Warren is a weapon on kickoff returns. Deon Stewart is likely to retain the punt return job after showing flashes as a junior. Reid Bauer took over the punting chores a few games into 2018, and the sophomore needs to be much better — as does the entire unit.

FINAL ANALYSIS There are too many areas of need that have to be shored up to think that the Razorbacks can be a player in the SEC West this fall. A sweep of four nonconference games and a couple of SEC victories to reach bowl eligibility are within the realm of possibility.

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (6)

WR	**13**	**Deon Stewart (Sr.)**	**8**	**Mike Woods (So.)**
WR	1	De'Vion Warren (Jr.)	19	Tyson Morris (So.)
WR	7	Trey Knox (Fr.)	3	Koilan Jackson (So.)
LT	**74**	**Colton Jackson (Sr.)**	76	Myron Cunningham (Jr.)
LG	54	Austin Capps (Sr.)	55	Austin Nix (Fr.)
C	**66**	**Ty Clary (Jr.)**	75	Silas Robinson (Fr.)
RG	57	Shane Clenin (So.)	71	Ryan Winkel (Fr.)
RT	73	Noah Gatlin (Fr.)	78	Dalton Wagner (So.)
TE	**85**	**Cheyenne O'Grady (Sr.)**		Hudson Henry (Fr.)
QB	6	Ben Hicks (Sr.)	13	Connor Noland (Fr.)
RB	**5**	**Rakeem Boyd (Jr.)**	21	Devwah Whaley (Sr.)

DEFENSE (5)

Returning Starters in Bold

DE	5	Dorian Gerald (Sr.)	50	Eric Gregory (Fr.)
DT	**3**	**McTelvin Agim (Sr.)**	93	Isaiah Nichols (Fr.)
DT	**52**	**T.J. Smith (Sr.)**	42	Jonathan Marshall (Jr.)
DE	6	Gabe Richardson (Sr.)	86	Jamario Bell (Sr.)
WLB	10	Bumper Pool (So.)	20	Giovanni LaFrance (Jr.)
MLB	**8**	**De'Jon Harris (Sr.)**	31	Grant Morgan (Jr.)
SLB	27	Hayden Henry (Jr.)	22	Deon Edwards (Jr.)
CB	**4**	**Jarques McClellion (So.)**	23	Devin Bush (Fr.)
CB	21	Montaric Brown (So.)	15	LaDarrius Bishop (Fr.)
FS	17	Joe Foucha (So.)	37	Brenden Young (Sr.)
SS	**2**	**Kamren Curl (Jr.)**	18	Myles Mason (So.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	19	Connor Limpert (Sr.)	**KR** 1	De'Vion Warren (Jr.)
P	28	Reid Bauer (So.)	**PR** 13	Deon Stewart (Sr.)

2018 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Ty Storey	250	143	1,584	11	10
Cole Kelley	67	35	455	5	5

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD
Rakeem Boyd	**123**	**734**	**6.0**	**2**
Devwah Whaley	**82**	**368**	**4.5**	**2**
Chase Hayden	**57**	**251**	**4.4**	**1**
Ty Storey	67	146	2.2	1

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
La'Michael Pettway	30	499	16.6	4
Cheyenne O'Grady	**30**	**400**	**13.3**	**6**
Rakeem Boyd	**23**	**165**	**7.2**	**0**
Deon Stewart	**22**	**178**	**8.1**	**0**

KICKING: **Connor Limpert, 19-24 FGs**, 86 points

TACKLES: **De'Jon Harris, 118**; Santos Ramirez, 87

SACKS: Armon Watts, 7.0

INTERCEPTIONS: Ryan Pulley, 3

Returning Players in **Bold**

SCOUTING THE RAZORBACKS

OPPOSING COACHES SIZE UP ARKANSAS

"There's a lot of work to do, and it's going to take a while. The weakest point on offense is the line. They've got returning production, but there's a big shift in what they're being asked to do from the Bret Bielema era to now. They went from downhill to spread; that's tough on a line. The good news is that in Chad Morris' system it's possible for talented freshmen to contribute right away at receiver and running back. They can get going and play them young. … They're going after a lot of transfer portal guys. Can't blame 'em. This is just not a personnel fit right now. … Right now it looks like their QB race is going to be wide open through the summer. I think it comes down to having system experience in the SMU transfer (Ben Hicks) or the transfer from Texas A&M (Nick Starkel), who is the most talented. Chief's (John Chavis) defense in Year 2 is going to be aggressive. They have to be. Their linebackers are average, and their front doesn't have any depth. They're going to struggle against most teams because the physicality isn't there. That's not on Chief, it's just the roster. … Right now the job is to keep momentum in recruiting and build on that. It can turn quick if they recruit like they have been, because they're out selling immediate playing time in a high-scoring system in the SEC, and kids are noticing."

Auburn Tigers

National Forecast: **20** • SEC West Prediction: **4** • Projected Record: **7-5, 3-5 SEC**

Derrick Brown

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Gus Malzahn
Record at School: 53-27 (6 years)
Career Record: 62-30 (7 years)
Offensive Coordinators: Kodi Burns, Kenny Dillingham
Defensive Coordinators: Kevin Steele, Travis Williams
Location: Auburn, AL
Stadium: Jordan-Hare Stadium (87,451)

KEY TIGERS

DERRICK BROWN, DT The most impactful player on defense returns ready to have a monster final season.

JATARVIOUS WHITLOW, RB After a breakout freshman season, Whitlow appears poised to be Auburn's primary back this year.

MARLON DAVIDSON, DE The stats haven't always been there for the former top-50 recruit, but he has the talent to be a force on the defensive line.

KEY LOSSES

JARRETT STIDHAM, QB The best Auburn QB since Cam Newton, Stidham regressed a bit in 2018 amidst offensive struggles.

DESHAUN DAVIS, LB The heart of the defense can't be fully replaced after recording 116 tackles last season.

JAMEL DEAN, DB Battled injuries throughout his career but became Auburn's top cornerback and was a steady force.

RISING STAR

Announcers love to say a player has track speed, but **ANTHONY SCHWARTZ** really does. The sophomore, who ran a 10.07 100m in high school, has a strong argument as the fastest player in college football. Look for Auburn to do everything it can to get the ball in Schwartz's hands.

Auburn couldn't meet lofty preseason top-10 expectations in a tumultuous 2018 season. It got so bad at one point that there were reports that boosters were mobilizing to possibly force head coach Gus Malzahn out a year after he signed a lucrative seven-year, $49 million contract. Malzahn survived the noise but enters 2019 needing to fare better than last season's 8–5 record in the ultra-competitive SEC.

He'll have his hands full without a proven quarterback and no obvious option to choose. Malzahn, who will be the offensive play caller this season, needs to find the right answer there to meet expectations after the offense slumped in 2018. The Tigers ranked 79th in total offense, averaging only 389.9 yards per game, a significant drop from 2017's 451.6 yards per game.

Auburn has stockpiled talent on defense, notably defensive linemen Derrick Brown and Marlon Davidson, but the Tigers' hopes of contending in the SEC hinge on whether Malzahn can get the offense back on track.

OFFENSE Malzahn has to find a new quarterback after two-year starter Jarrett Stidham opted to leave early for the NFL. The Auburn head coach must choose from an inexperienced group that has as much uncertainty as it does talent. Junior quarterback Malik Willis served as Stidham's backup the last two years but has thrown only 14 passes and looked lost at times in live action. Redshirt freshman Joey Gatewood has all the physical attributes Malzahn likes, while true freshman Bo Nix, a five-star recruit, is considered to be the future of the program.

For the first time in a decade, Auburn didn't have a 1,000-yard rusher in 2018, due to a struggling offensive line and a committee approach. JaTarvious "Boobee" Whitlow emerged as the best of the committee and should be the featured back after rushing for 787 yards and six touchdowns. Kam Martin and Shaun Shivers are both solid as secondary options.

The Tigers lose their top two receivers, Ryan Davis and Darius Slayton, but there's reason to believe Auburn's receiving corps will be even better in 2019. Anthony Schwartz (seven total touchdowns) and Seth Williams (534 yards and five touchdowns) were revelations as true freshmen last season and should play significant roles in the offense. Eli Stove and Will Hastings both missed substantial time last season with injuries but will provide security blankets for whoever emerges as the starting quarterback.

All five starters on the offensive line return, though the group was inconsistent at best and struggled for a good chunk of last season. There was progress at the end of the season, though, and getting Prince Tega Wanogho and Marquel Harrell back to power the left side of the line is a positive.

DEFENSE The talent starts up front for Auburn, where the Tigers have almost an embarrassment of riches on the defensive line. Brown and Davidson surprisingly decided to return for their senior seasons, giving the Tigers pos-

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	vs. Oregon #
Sept.	7	Tulane
Sept.	14	Kent State
Sept.	21	at Texas A&M
Sept.	28	Mississippi State
Oct.	5	at Florida
Oct.	19	at Arkansas
Oct.	26	at LSU
Nov.	2	Ole Miss
Nov.	16	Georgia
Nov.	23	Samford
Nov.	30	Alabama

#Arlington, TX

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 8-5, 3-5 SEC

Sept.	1	vs. Washington #	W	21-16
Sept.	8	Alabama State	W	63-9
Sept.	15	LSU	L	21-22
Sept.	22	Arkansas	W	34-3
Sept.	29	Southern Miss	W	24-13
Oct.	6	at Mississippi State	L	9-23
Oct.	13	Tennessee	L	24-30
Oct.	20	at Ole Miss	W	31-16
Nov.	3	Texas A&M	W	28-24
Nov.	10	at Georgia	L	10-27
Nov.	17	Liberty	W	53-0
Nov.	24	at Alabama	L	21-52
Dec.	28	vs. Purdue %	W	63-14

#Atlanta %Music City Bowl

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	SEC	NATIONAL
Scoring	30.9 ppg	8	48
Rushing	167.5 ypg	10	68
Passing	222.5 ypg	9	75
Total	389.9 ypg	11	79
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**SEC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	19.2 ppg	4	14
Rushing	135.9 ypg	6	32
Passing	219.5 ypg	7	58
Total	355.4 ypg	8	37
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**SEC**	**NATIONAL**
+9	+0.69	3	16

2019 RECRUITS

1. Owen Pappoe, LB, Lawrenceville, GA
2. Bo Nix, QB, Pinson, AL
3. Charles Moore, DE, Louisville, MS
4. Mark-Antony Richards, RB, Wellington, FL
5. Jaren Handy, DE, Hattiesburg, MS
6. Zion Puckett, S, Griffin, GA
7. Keiondre Jones, OG, LaGrange, GA
8. Derick Hall, DE, Gulfport, MS
9. Jashawn Sheffield, WR, Brunswick, GA
10. D.J. Williams, RB, Lake Placid, FL
11. Jaylin Simpson, CB, Brunswick, GA
12. Colby Wooden, DE, Lawrenceville, GA
13. Ja'Varrius Johnson, WR, Trussville, AL
14. Tyler Fromm, TE, Warner Robins, GA
15. Nehemiah Pritchett, CB, Jackson, AL
16. Justin Osborne, OG, Flower Mound, TX
17. Kamaar Bell, OG, Moultrie, GA
18. Luke Deal, TE, Greenwood, SC
19. Octavius Brothers, LB, Titusville, FL
20. Kameron Brown, LB, Sugar Hill, GA

Recruits ranked according to the 247SportsComposite

Todd Van Emst/AU Athletics

ADVANCED STATS

5 Factors: College Football's Most Important Stats

Field Position[1]		Rank
Offense	32.6	13
Defense	27.1	16
Margin	**+5.5**	**9**

Efficiency[2]		Rank
Offense	42.3%	65
Defense	35.6%	14
Margin	**+6.7%**	**24**

Explosiveness[3]		Rank
Offense	5.7	71
Defense	5.2	34
Margin	**+0.5**	**45**

Finishing Drives[4]		Rank
Offense	4.4	86
Defense	3.9	20
Margin	**+0.5**	**33**

Adjusted TO Margin[5]		Rank
Projected	0.9	61
Actual	9	15
Margin	**+8.1**	**9**

KEY: 1-Average starting field position by yard line; **2**-Rate of successful plays (gaining 50% of necessary yards on 1st down, 70% on 2nd down, 100% on 3rd down); **3**-Explosiveness=yards per play; **4**-Points per trip inside 40-yard line; **5**-TO margin accounting for "luck" • Advanced stats provided by Bill Connelly of SB Nation

NUMBERS TO KNOW

0

Auburn entered 2018 having to replace four offensive linemen who had combined for 121 career starts. This year's line has far greater stability: zero career starts to replace.

4.1/1.2

The biggest drop-off for Auburn's offense may have been in the big-play department. In 2017, the Tigers made 5.4 gains per game of 20-plus yards (36th in FBS) and 1.9 of 40-plus (10th), but in 2018? Down to 4.1 of 20-plus (102nd) and 1.2 of 40-plus (50th).

+8.1

Based on national averages for fumble recovery rates and the ratio of interceptions to passes broken up, Auburn's turnover margin should have been plus-0.9. Instead, it was plus-9. That plus-8.1 difference was the ninth-most positive turnover luck in the country and the most in the SEC.

sibly the best 1-2 punch in the SEC. Nick Coe is a menace as an edge rusher — he led the team with seven sacks last season — and Auburn just reloaded the cupboard with four four-star linemen in its 2019 recruiting class. It won't be easy to replace four-year starter Dontavius Russell at defensive tackle, but Tyrone Truesdell and Coynis Miller both have the talent to plug the hole.

It will be crucial for the talented defensive line to meet expectations given that Auburn must replace its entire starting linebacker group from last season. Inside linebacker Deshaun Davis (116 tackles) will be especially difficult to replace, though K.J. Britt is the favorite to do so. Look out for incoming five-star Owen Pappoe, who has the talent and temperament to make an immediate impact. Defensive coordinator Kevin Steele will likely have to mix and match until he finds a group he likes.

On the back end, Auburn has one of the SEC's top safety pairings in Daniel Thomas and Jeremiah Dinson. Smoke Monday and Jamien Sherwood are proven contributors who can step in and play at safety, too. There aren't as many known quantities at cornerback with the Tigers' top DB in 2018, Jamel Dean, off to the NFL. The Tigers will need players such as Noah Igbinoghene, Javaris Davis and Christian Tutt to step up at the cornerback spots.

SPECIALISTS The Tigers experienced a mixed bag from special teams in 2018. Arryn Siposs finally gave Auburn a viable punter after years of issues, finishing the year with the 18th-best punting average (44.2 yards) in the country. It didn't go quite as well for true freshman Anders Carlson, who struggled to replace his All-America brother Daniel and made only 60 percent (15-of-25) of his field goal attempts. Igbinoghene and Whitlow, the team's top two kick returners last season, both return, but Auburn needs to find a new punt returner.

FINAL ANALYSIS This team's ability to meet expectations might come down to the quarterback. The defense should be strong, assuming that linebacker isn't a mess, but the entire offense hinges on Malzahn's QB pick. There isn't enough talent at running back and on the offensive line to be able to bank on only a strong rushing attack.

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (6)

WR	**18**	**Seth Williams (So.)**	11	Shedrick Jackson (So.)
WR	5	Anthony Schwartz (So.)	12	Eli Stove (Jr.)
WR	33	Will Hastings (Sr.)	80	Sal Cannella (Sr.)
LT	**76**	**Prince Tega Wanogho (Sr.)**	66	Bailey Sharp (Sr.)
LG	**77**	**Marquel Harrell (Sr.)**	56	Tashawn Manning (So.)
C	**54**	**Kaleb Kim (Sr.)**	52	Nick Brahms (So.)
RG	**64**	**Mike Horton (Sr.)**	59	Brodarious Hamm (So.)
RT	**71**	**Jack Driscoll (Sr.)**	68	Austin Troxell (So.)
TE	47	John Samuel Shenker (So.)	22	Harold Joiner (Fr.)
QB	14	Malik Willis (Jr.)	1	Joey Gatewood (Fr.)
RB	28	JaTarvious Whitlow (So.)	9	Kam Martin (Sr.)

DEFENSE (7)

Returning Starters in Bold

DE	**91**	**Nick Coe (Jr.)**	55	T.D. Moultry (Jr.)
DT	**5**	**Derrick Brown (Sr.)**	44	Daquan Newkirk (Jr.)
DT	94	Tyrone Truesdell (Jr.)	8	Coynis Miller Jr. (So.)
DE	**3**	**Marlon Davidson (Sr.)**	1	Big Kat Bryant (Jr.)
OLB	31	Chandler Wooten (Jr.)	35	Zakoby McClain (So.)
ILB	33	K.J. Britt (Jr.)	30	Michael Harris (Fr.)
OLB	10	Owen Pappoe (Fr.)	35	Zakoby McClain (So.)
CB	**4**	**Noah Igbinoghene (Jr.)**	17	Roger McCreary (So.)
CB	**13**	**Javaris Davis (Sr.)**	6	Christian Tutt (So.)
S	**20**	**Jeremiah Dinson (Sr.)**	21	Smoke Monday (So.)
S	**24**	**Daniel Thomas (Sr.)**	9	Jamien Sherwood (So.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	26	Anders Carlson (So.)	**KR**	4	Noah Igbinoghene (Jr.)
P	90	Arryn Siposs (Jr.)	**PR**	6	Christian Tutt (So.)

2018 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Jarrett Stidham	369	224	2,794	18	5
Malik Willis	**7**	**5**	**24**	**0**	**0**

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD
JaTarvious Whitlow	**150**	**787**	**5.2**	**6**
Kam Martin	**103**	**458**	**4.4**	**1**
Shaun Shivers	**70**	**371**	**5.3**	**3**
Anthony Schwartz	**27**	**211**	**7.8**	**5**

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Ryan Davis	69	546	7.9	1
Darius Slayton	35	670	19.1	5
Seth Williams	**26**	**534**	**20.5**	**5**
Anthony Schwartz	**22**	**357**	**16.2**	**2**

KICKING: **Anders Carlson, 15-25 FGs, 89 points**

TACKLES: Deshaun Davis, 116; Two players tied with 74

SACKS: **Nick Coe, 7.0**

INTERCEPTIONS: Four players tied with 2

Returning Players in **Bold**

SCOUTING THE TIGERS

OPPOSING COACHES SIZE UP AUBURN

"The most talked-about school in the league right now. Gus Malzahn is back calling the plays again. Usually that works out pretty well for his teams, and if they get back to their old ways this year, I can bet you he won't give up play calling for the rest of his career. The bowl game (vs. Purdue) was old-school Gus Malzahn. ... It's all about the quarterback race here. We think it's wide open between the four QBs on the roster. And don't think they won't start a true freshman, either. ... Their offensive line was young last year and should be much improved. The wide receivers need work; there isn't a particular guy that knocks you over on tape. I think the big thing is how deep their personnel really goes. It's not the first-level guys with Auburn, it's the second string. How much depth do they really have?. ... I think their defensive talent is better than their offensive talent again this year, which for Malzahn is pretty strange. Derrick Brown was their biggest returnee. Bringing him back kept a really great defense together. They could have the best defensive line in the nation if they stay healthy. You can't say enough about what Kevin Steele has done with that defense. ... There's more pressure at Auburn than maybe anywhere else in the SEC because Alabama is your in-state rival, but this isn't really the season to make a call on Malzahn unless the wheels completely fall off."

LSU **Tigers**

National Forecast: **7** • SEC West Prediction: **2** • Projected Record: **10-2, 6-2 SEC**

Grant Delpit

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Ed Orgeron
Record at School: 25-9 (2+ years)
Career Record: 41-36 (5+ years)
Offensive Coordinator: Steve Ensminger
Defensive Coordinator: Dave Aranda
Location: Baton Rouge, LA
Stadium: Tiger Stadium (102,321)

KEY TIGERS

JOE BURROW, QB The Ohio State transfer quickly impressed his new team with his tough-minded play and should thrive in LSU's new RPO attack.

RASHARD LAWRENCE, DE The Fiesta Bowl Defensive MVP gave LSU a huge boost when he decided to return for his senior season.

GRANT DELPIT, SS Delpit's knack for making the big play makes him LSU's most feared defensive back since Tyrann Mathieu.

KEY LOSSES

DEVIN WHITE, LB The heart, soul and physical leader of LSU's defense the past two years will be impossible to replace.

GREEDY WILLIAMS, CB Will be remembered for his shutdown ability but also for shutting down his LSU career before the Fiesta Bowl.

COLE TRACY, PK In one record-setting season, Tracy became the best placekicker in school history.

RISING STAR

The nation's No. 2-rated running back prospect, **JOHN EMERY JR.** may not be expected to be quite the dominant player Leonard Fournette was when he arrived at LSU in 2014. But Emery could easily become the Tigers' starter in time for the season opener.

The LSU Tigers return seven starters on offense, eight on defense and landed a top-five recruiting class. But it may be the new $400,000-per-year assistant who makes the biggest impact.

Coach Ed Orgeron hired Joe Brady away from the New Orleans Saints to serve as LSU's passing game coordinator. Brady's tasks: integrate elements of the Saints' potent passing game into LSU's playbook while also incorporating the run-pass option principles he learned as a graduate assistant under then-Penn State offensive coordinator and current Mississippi State head coach Joe Moorhead.

Believe it or not, LSU's archaic power running game may be a thing of the past.

"I'm so fired up about our offense," Orgeron said during spring practice. "I just see the offense I finally want."

OFFENSE Senior quarterback Joe Burrow is on board with the transition to the RPO, the type of offense the former Ohio State transfer says he's been running since he was 13. "This is what I'm used to," says Burrow, who threw for 2,894 yards and 16 touchdowns in 2018 and ran for another 399 yards and seven scores.

Though 1,000-yard rusher Nick Brossette is gone, based on pure talent the Tigers should be better in 2019 thanks to the arrival of freshman John Emery Jr., the nation's No. 2-ranked running back prospect. For now, the starting slot belongs to junior Clyde Edwards-Helaire, the top returning rusher with 658 yards and seven TDs.

Burrow quickly developed a chemistry with Justin Jefferson, making him his go-to receiver. Jefferson wound up with 54 catches for 875 yards and six touchdowns. But LSU needs Stephen Sullivan, Ja'Marr Chase, Terrace Marshall Jr. and Derrick Dillon to be more consistent playmakers. Finding a replacement for departed senior tight end Foster Moreau is a big priority as no other tight end caught a pass in 2018. Junior Jamal Pettigrew and junior college transfer TK McLendon are the top candidates.

LSU returns a solid group of offensive linemen. Center Lloyd Cushenberry III and right guard Damien Lewis started all 13 games, while right tackle Austin Deculus started 11 games and left tackle Saahdiq Charles 10. Badara Traore could beat out Charles after he struggled with the transition from junior college in 2018. And Deculus will be fending off freshman Anthony Bradford in preseason camp. Sophomore Chasen Hines, who played the most snaps of any O-line backup, or true freshman Kardell Thomas will win the open job at left guard.

DEFENSE Rashard Lawrence sat out the spring with knee surgery, but the mere presence of the Fiesta Bowl Defensive MVP was a huge "recruiting" coup for Orgeron. Oft-injured nose tackle Ed Alexander departed early for the NFL, but Tyler Shelvin logged a lot of snaps in 2018. He will be pushed by freshman Siaki "Apu" Ika, a January enrollee. Breiden Fehoko is back in the rotation after a biceps tear that required surgery. He can also slide into the middle to play nose but likely will start the fall as Glen Logan's backup at end.

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	Georgia Southern
Sept.	7	at Texas
Sept.	14	Northwestern State
Sept.	21	at Vanderbilt
Oct.	5	Utah State
Oct.	12	Florida
Oct.	19	at Mississippi State
Oct.	26	Auburn
Nov.	9	at Alabama
Nov.	16	at Ole Miss
Nov.	23	Arkansas
Nov.	30	Texas A&M

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 10-3, 5-3 SEC

Sept.	2	vs. Miami #	W	33-17
Sept.	8	SE Louisiana	W	31-0
Sept.	15	at Auburn	W	22-21
Sept.	22	Louisiana Tech	W	38-21
Sept.	29	Ole Miss	W	45-16
Oct.	6	at Florida	L	19-27
Oct.	13	Georgia	W	36-16
Oct.	20	Mississippi State	W	19-3
Nov.	3	Alabama	L	0-29
Nov.	10	at Arkansas	W	24-17
Nov.	17	Rice	W	42-10
Nov.	24	at Texas A&M (ot)	L	72-74
Jan.	1	vs. UCF %	W	40-32

#Arlington, TX %Fiesta Bowl

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	SEC	NATIONAL
Scoring	32.4 ppg	7	38
Rushing	173.6 ypg	8	59
Passing	228.5 ypg	7	67
Total	402.1 ypg	9	69
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**SEC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	21.8 ppg	7	26
Rushing	138.6 ypg	7	34
Passing	200.1 ypg	6	38
Total	338.7 ypg	5	25
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**SEC**	**NATIONAL**
+12	+0.92	1	7

2019 RECRUITS

1. Derek Stingley Jr., CB, Baton Rouge, LA
2. John Emery Jr., RB, Destrehan, LA
3. Marcel Brooks, S, Flower Mound, TX
4. Kardell Thomas, OG, Baton Rouge, LA
5. Trey Palmer, WR, Kentwood, LA
6. Maurice Hampton Jr., CB, Arlington, TN
7. Siaki Ika, DT, Salt Lake City, UT
8. Tyrion Davis-Price, RB, Baton Rouge, LA
9. Ray Parker, OT, Ruston, LA
10. Donte Starks, LB, Marrero, LA
11. Devonta Lee, WR, Amite, LA
12. Anthony Bradford, OG, Muskegon, MI
13. Peter Parrish, QB, Phenix City, AL
14. Raydarious Jones, CB, Horn Lake, MS
15. Thomas Perry, OT, Lafayette, LA
16. Jay Ward, CB, Moultrie, GA
17. Kendall McCallum, LB, Oxford, AL
18. Charles Turner, OL, Canton, OH
19. Cordale Flott, CB, Saraland, AL
20. Joseph Evans, DT, Haynesville, LA
21. Soni Fonua, LB, Salt Lake City, UT*
22. TK McLendon, TE, Soperton, GA*
23. Desmond Little, LB, Mobile, AL
24. Cade York, K, Prosper, TX
25. Quentin Skinner, LS, Buford, GA

*junior college transfer

Recruits ranked according to the 247SportsComposite

John Korduner/Icon Sportswire via AP Images

ADVANCED STATS

5 Factors: College Football's Most Important Stats

Field Position[1]		Rank
Offense	33.0	9
Defense	27.4	20
Margin	**+5.6**	**8**

Efficiency[2]		Rank
Offense	40.6%	87
Defense	37.6%	24
Margin	**+3.0%**	**48**

Explosiveness[3]		Rank
Offense	5.5	84
Defense	4.8	21
Margin	**+0.7**	**34**

Finishing Drives[4]		Rank
Offense	4.6	70
Defense	4.7	79
Margin	**-0.1**	**73**

Adjusted TO Margin[5]		Rank
Projected	4.0	39
Actual	12	7
Margin	**+8.0**	**10**

KEY: 1-Average starting field position by yard line; **2**-Rate of successful plays (gaining 50% of necessary yards on 1st down, 70% on 2nd down, 100% on 3rd down); **3**-Explosiveness=yards per play; **4**-Points per trip inside 40-yard line; **5**-TO margin accounting for "luck" • Advanced stats provided by Bill Connelly of SB Nation

NUMBERS TO KNOW

60

LSU always forces you to play physically and gang tackle. Tiger ball carriers were brought down by a solo tackle only 60 percent of the time in 2018, the second-lowest average in FBS. They were the lowest in 2017 and the second lowest in 2016, too.

5.6

What happens when you've got an efficient defense and good special teams? You probably win the field position battle. LSU's field position margin of plus-5.6 yards per possession was best in the conference and No. 8 nationally.

4.7

LSU didn't allow many scoring chances, but the Tigers were strangely ineffective when they did: They allowed 4.7 points per scoring opportunity (first downs inside the defense's 40), 79th in the country and second worst in the SEC.

Replacing Butkus Award winner Devin White may be an impossible challenge, and it will probably take more than one player to compensate for his productivity. Junior Jacob Phillips, LSU's top returning tackler with 87 stops, is a good place to start. He's joined inside by Patrick Queen, while senior Michael Divinity Jr. (tied for first with 5.0 sacks) occupies the F-linebacker slot on the outside opposite K'Lavon Chaisson's Buck linebacker position. Chaisson suffered a season-ending knee injury in the opener against Miami, but he is a talented edge rusher who should automatically regain his starting spot.

LSU's secondary is part veterans, part newcomers — and all talent. Strong safety Grant Delpit, who led the Tigers in sacks and interceptions (five each) and pass deflections (nine), should be everybody's All-American in 2019. After bouncing from offense to defense, junior JaCoby Stevens appears to have found a home at free safety. Kary Vincent Jr. lines up at LSU's nickel back, leaving the true cornerback duties to senior Kristian Fulton and freshman Derek Stingley Jr. Fulton spent the offseason mending from late-season ankle surgery. Stingley took part in some of LSU's bowl practices, giving him a jump on replacing All-American Greedy Williams.

SPECIALISTS All-American Cole Tracy set or tied seven school records in his one season at LSU and finished as the most prolific kicker in NCAA history. His successor will likely be freshman Cade York or big-legged sophomore Avery Atkins, who drilled 71-of-79 kickoffs for touchbacks — an FBS-best 89.9 percent clip. LSU's punters will again be junior Zach Von Rosenberg (long kicks) and senior Josh Growden (short), but the Tigers need a punt return specialist. Stingley will be given first crack. Edwards-Helaire and Vincent will return kickoffs.

FINAL ANALYSIS LSU looks to parlay its first New Year's Six bowl into being a true contender for the College Football Playoff. The road schedule is daunting, with a September trip to Texas and a November showdown at Alabama. But if LSU can manage to drop just one of those and hold serve on its remaining schedule, the Tigers can be in the mix for the CFP provided the new RPO attack is as productive as hoped.

DEPTH CHART

LSU

OFFENSE (7)

WR	19	Derrick Dillon (Sr.)	12	Jonathan Giles (Sr.)
WR	1	**Ja'Marr Chase (So.)**	6	Terrace Marshall Jr. (So.)
WR	2	**Justin Jefferson (Jr.)**		Devonta Lee (Fr.)
LT	77	**Saahdiq Charles (Jr.)**	74	Badara Traore (Sr.)
LG		Kardell Thomas (Fr.)	57	Chasen Hines (So.)
C	79	**Lloyd Cushenberry III (Jr.)**	67	Cole Smith (Fr.)
RG	68	**Damien Lewis (Sr.)**	71	Donavaughn Campbell (Jr.)
RT	76	**Austin Deculus (Jr.)**		Anthony Bradford (Fr.)
TE	80	Jamal Pettigrew (Jr.)	84	TK McLendon (Jr.)
QB	9	**Joe Burrow (Sr.)**	15	Myles Brennan (So.)
RB	22	Clyde Edwards-Helaire (Jr.)		John Emery Jr. (Fr.)

DEFENSE (8)

Returning Starters in Bold

DE	97	**Glen Logan (Jr.)**	91	**Breiden Fehoko (Sr.)**
NT	72	Tyler Shelvin (So.)	62	Siaki Ika (Fr.)
DE	90	**Rashard Lawrence (Sr.)**		Soni Fonua (Jr.)
BUCK	4	K'Lavon Chaisson (So.)	46	Andre Anthony (Jr.)
MLB	6	**Jacob Phillips (Jr.)**	23	Micah Baskerville (So.)
MLB	8	Patrick Queen (Jr.)	35	Damone Clark (So.)
F-LB	45	**Michael Divinity Jr. (Sr.)**	43	Ray Thornton (Jr.)
CB	24	Derek Stingley Jr. (Fr.)	1	Kelvin Joseph (So.)
CB	22	**Kristian Fulton (Sr.)**	5	**Kary Vincent Jr. (Jr.)**
FS	3	JaCoby Stevens (Jr.)	33	Todd Harris Jr. (Jr.)
SS	7	**Grant Delpit (Jr.)**		Marcel Brooks (Fr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K		Cade York (Fr.)	KR	22	Clyde Edwards-Helaire (Jr.)
P	46	Zach Von Rosenberg (Jr.)	PR	24	Derek Stingley Jr. (Fr.)

2018 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Joe Burrow	**379**	**219**	**2,894**	**16**	**5**
Myles Brennan	**6**	**4**	**65**	**0**	**0**

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD
Nick Brossette	240	1,039	4.3	14
Clyde Edwards-Helaire	**146**	**658**	**4.5**	**7**
Joe Burrow	**128**	**399**	**3.1**	**7**
Lanard Fournette	**12**	**106**	**8.8**	**1**

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Justin Jefferson	**54**	**875**	**16.2**	**6**
Stephen Sullivan	**23**	**363**	**15.8**	**2**
Ja'Marr Chase	**23**	**313**	**13.6**	**3**
Derrick Dillon	**22**	**307**	**14.0**	**2**

KICKING: Cole Tracy, 29-33 FGs, 129 points

TACKLES: Devin White, 123; **Jacob Phillips, 87**

SACKS: **Grant Delpit, 5.0, Michael Divinity Jr., 5.0**

INTERCEPTIONS: **Grant Delpit, 5**

Returning Players in **Bold**

SCOUTING THE TIGERS

OPPOSING COACHES SIZE UP LSU

"This team could be their best chance to catch Alabama in a long time. You see athleticism and size everywhere. They're big and strong on both lines. They're going to be physical all over. … Joe Burrow is the best quarterback to play for the Tigers in a long time, and he's definitely one of the (SEC's) best returning quarterbacks. His development will change that offense. They should have enough starting talent at running back for at least two SEC teams. Foster Moreau was a great tight end, they don't have anyone like that to replace him. … Great linebacker play even with Devin White being gone. Patrick Queen came in for him vs. Alabama (after a targeting call on White) and did really well. Solid secondary play still on the roster despite them losing a lot to the NFL. They recruit really well to that position. … The focus will be on the offense and what the new offensive guy (former Saints assistant coach Joe Brady) brings in. Expect some newer stuff passing. I know they're talking about installing RPO, but they still want to smash you running the ball, and if you have the bigs that's what you do in this league. And Ed Orgeron has a history with his play callers. He doesn't stray too far from what he's comfortable with no matter what he says when he hires them. … This is the best team Orgeron has had. If they expand the offense they can beat anyone."

Ole Miss **Rebels**

National Forecast: **62** • SEC West Prediction: **6** • Projected Record: **5-7, 2-6 SEC**

Matt Corral

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Matt Luke
Record at School: 11-13 (2 years)
Career Record: 11-13 (2 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Rich Rodriguez
Defensive Coordinator: Mike MacIntyre
Location: Oxford, MS
Stadium: Vaught-Hemingway Stadium (64,038)

KEY REBELS

SCOTTIE PHILLIPS, RB Only a late-season ankle injury prevented Phillips from posting 1,000 rushing yards in his first season after transferring from junior college.

ALEX GIVENS, OT Overlooked on last year's line; he's one of only two returning starters and brings the flexibility to excel at either tackle spot.

ELIJAH MOORE, WR Broke into last year's rotation with 36 catches for 398 yards. Will contribute in the run game in the new spread option.

KEY LOSSES

D.K. METCALF, WR Freak athlete gave Ole Miss a 6'4" target with speed and leaping ability.

A.J. BROWN, WR Ole Miss enjoyed a matchup advantage with his size in the slot and his ability to lose defenders with quick cuts.

GREG LITTLE, OT Not in the class of former Ole Miss great Laremy Tunsil, but Little's nimble footwork made him an effective left tackle in the SEC.

RISING STAR

ELIJAH MOORE didn't post eye-popping numbers as a freshman, but he was surrounded by attractive targets. Now Ole Miss is rebuilding at receiver, and Moore, who has shown trustworthy hands and the ability to adjust while tracking the ball in flight, is the focus.

Matt Luke, beginning his third season as an SEC head coach, hired big names and experienced hands in the offseason to help him rebuild Ole Miss football. Former Pac-12 coaches Rich Rodriguez and Mike MacIntyre hope to help the Rebels turn things around.

Rodriguez spent the spring installing the run-based spread option he favored at West Virginia, Michigan and Arizona. He'll give the keys to quarterback Matt Corral, a redshirt freshman.

Luke saw big strides from Corral in the spring. "If he makes a mistake he's not losing his cool. He's ready to play the next play," Luke says. "He's communicating with receivers, talking to the offensive line and doing the things it takes to be a great quarterback."

MacIntyre believes that his 3-4 scheme can improve a defense that ranked No. 97 or lower in every major statistical category last year.

OFFENSE All four scholarship quarterbacks are freshmen, although Corral is a redshirt freshman. At 6'1", 207 pounds, he showed touch and accuracy last year while benefiting from the new four-game rule for true freshmen to maintain a season of eligibility. Luke calls him a "willing runner" in a system that will call on the quarterback to run more than in the last two seasons.

The Rebels expect to have ability if not experience at receiver after the departure of last year's three starters — D.K. Metcalf, A.J. Brown and DaMarkus Lodge. So was tight end Dawson Knox.

Sophomore slot receiver Elijah Moore had 36 catches for 398 yards as a freshman and showed he could make tough catches in traffic. He'll have an expanded role in the run game. After playing behind the big three, Braylon Sanders will become more of a downfield target. He averaged 16.9 yards per catch last year and in limited opportunities showed big-play potential.

Running back Scottie Phillips has All-SEC potential. He narrowly missed 1,000 yards last year as a first-year junior college transfer and would have gotten there had an ankle injury against Texas A&M not kept him out of most of the last three games.

Ole Miss offensive players may need to be extra elusive early while a rebuilding offensive line — only two starters return — finds its way.

DEFENSE Ole Miss defensive ends made the adjustment to standing as outside linebackers in the spring. Senior Qaadir Sheppard, who began his career at Syracuse, says the change suits him. He had 10 tackles for a loss last year.

Improvement against the run was the battle cry in 2018 and will be again after the Rebels allowed 221.8 rushing yards per game last year. "I like the 3-4 principle for a lot of reasons," MacIntyre says. "You're able to clog up the B gaps and make the ball bounce, and you're able to bring edge pressure. We've developed a 3-4 scheme to fit college football in the wide, spread game."

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	at Memphis
Sept.	7	Arkansas
Sept.	14	SE Louisiana
Sept.	21	California
Sept.	28	at Alabama
Oct.	5	Vanderbilt
Oct.	12	at Missouri
Oct.	19	Texas A&M
Nov.	2	at Auburn
Nov.	9	New Mexico State
Nov.	16	LSU
Nov.	28	at Mississippi State

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 5-7, 1-7 SEC

Sept.	1	vs. Texas Tech #	W	47-27
Sept.	8	Southern Illinois	W	76-41
Sept.	15	Alabama	L	7-62
Sept.	22	Kent State	W	38-17
Sept.	29	at LSU	L	16-45
Oct.	6	ULM	W	70-21
Oct.	13	vs. Arkansas %	W	37-33
Oct.	20	Auburn	L	16-31
Nov.	3	South Carolina	L	44-48
Nov.	10	at Texas A&M	L	24-38
Nov.	17	at Vanderbilt (ot)	L	29-36
Nov.	22	Mississippi State	L	3-35

#Houston %Little Rock

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	SEC	NATIONAL
Scoring	33.9 ppg	6	30
Rushing	164.1 ypg	11	72
Passing	346.4 ypg	1	5
Total	510.5 ypg	2	9
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**SEC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	36.2 ppg	14	113
Rushing	221.8 ypg	14	116
Passing	261.7 ypg	13	111
Total	483.4 ypg	14	121
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**SEC**	**NATIONAL**
+1	+0.08	9	57

2019 RECRUITS

1. Jerrion Ealy, RB, Walnut Grove, MS
2. Dannis Jackson, WR, Sumrall, MS
3. Jonathan Mingo, WR, Brandon, MS
4. Lakia Henry, LB, Vidalia, GA*
5. Darius Thomas, OT, Jonesboro, AR
6. Sam Williams, DE, Montgomery, AL*
7. John Rhys Plumlee, QB, Hattiesburg, MS
8. Grant Tisdale, QB, Allen, TX
9. Nick Broeker, OT, Springfield, IL
10. Jadon Jackson, WR, Centerton, AR
11. Deantre Prince, DB, Charleston, MS
12. LeDarrius Cox, DT, Mobile, AL
13. Patrick Lucas, DT, Wetumpka, AL
14. Jonathan Haynes, S, Benoit, MS*
15. Jordan Jernigan, WR, Tupelo, MS
16. Brandon Mack, DE, Montgomery, AL
17. Jeremy James, OT, Cumming, GA
18. Reece McIntyre, OT, Buford, GA
19. A.J. Finley, S, Mobile, AL
20. Ashanti Cistrunk, LB, Louisville, MS
21. Dontario Drummond, WR, Laurel, MS*
22. Jamar Richardson, CB, Aliceville*
23. Jalen Jordan, CB, Lake Cormorant, MS
24. Snoop Conner, RB, Hattiesburg, MS
25. Jay Stanley, S, Brandon, MS
26. Bryce Ramsey, OG, Gulfport, MS
27. Caleb Warren, OT, Louisville, MS
28. Carter Colquitt, OT, Buford, GA
29. Kinkead Dent, QB, Jackson, MS
30. Tavario Standifer, LB, Tupelo, MS
31. Eric Jeffries, OLB, Oxford, MS

*junior college transfer

Recruits ranked according to the 247SportsComposite

Ole Miss Athletics

ADVANCED STATS

5 Factors: College Football's Most Important Stats

Field Position[1]		Rank
Offense	26.0	126
Defense	29.5	72
Margin	**-3.5**	**109**
Efficiency[2]		**Rank**
Offense	48.6%	10
Defense	46.9%	113
Margin	**+1.7%**	**59**
Explosiveness[3]		**Rank**
Offense	7.1	5
Defense	6.3	114
Margin	**+0.8**	**30**
Finishing Drives[4]		**Rank**
Offense	4.8	49
Defense	4.5	67
Margin	**+0.3**	**57**
Adjusted TO Margin[5]		**Rank**
Projected	0.4	70
Actual	1	57
Margin	**+0.6**	**54**

KEY: 1-Average starting field position by yard line; **2**-Rate of successful plays (gaining 50% of necessary yards on 1st down, 70% on 2nd down, 100% on 3rd down); **3**-Explosiveness=yards per play; **4**-Points per trip inside 40-yard line; **5**-TO margin accounting for "luck" • Advanced stats provided by Bill Connelly of SB Nation

NUMBERS TO KNOW

46.9

The Ole Miss defense ranked 113th in FBS, allowing a 46.9 percent success rate (percentage of plays that gained at least 50 percent of necessary yardage on first down, 70 percent on second or 100 percent on third or fourth).

8.2/6.5

First downs were exciting in Ole Miss games, and for both teams: The Rebels averaged 8.2 yards per play on first down (second in FBS) but also allowed 6.5 per play (109th).

4.3

Can the era of explosiveness continue? Ole Miss averaged 4.3 gains per game of 30-plus yards in 2018, best in the country. The Rebels still have big-play weapons like Scottie Phillips and Braylon Sanders, but the passing game has so many key pieces to replace.

Junior college transfer Sam Williams is expected to make a quick impact as a pass rusher at outside linebacker. He's 6'3", 258 and had 17.5 sacks at Northeast Mississippi Community College last year.

Junior linebacker Mohamed Sanogo led the Rebels with 112 tackles and takes over one of the inside spots. Junior college transfer Lakia Henry, a contender for the other inside spot, will have to be brought up to speed quickly. He did not arrive on campus in time for spring drills.

The outside backers will occasionally put a hand in the dirt and give the Rebels a five-man front.

More often than not, though, interior linemen Benito Jones and Josiah Coatney will have the strange sensation of having no one beside them at the line of scrimmage. Jones will play nose and Coatney end. Jones had nine tackles for a loss last year, and Coatney was third with 63 overall tackles.

Jaylon Jones' return to the secondary will be a big lift provided he makes a full recovery from the ACL tear he suffered in the season opener against Texas Tech last year.

SPECIALISTS Placekicker Luke Logan and punter Mac Brown are both returning starters. Logan made 22 field goals last year, tying for the second most in school history, but he missed two from under 30 yards and missed an extra point as well. Brown averaged 41.2 yards with a long of 65 on 48 punts. Jaylon Jones could bring a lift to the return game. He ranked third in the SEC with 25.0 yards per kick return in 2017 and had a 94-yard touchdown against Texas Tech before getting hurt last year.

FINAL ANALYSIS There is ability on offense, although the Rebels are inexperienced at most positions. There's more experience on defense, but there are fewer proven playmakers on that side of the ball, and newcomers Williams and Henry will need to produce.

You don't go through NCAA sanctions without feeling the pain, and depth is an issue.

Luke has added quality coaching to his staff, and if the Rebels are going to reach bowl eligibility, Rodriguez and MacIntyre will have to make as big an impact as any of the players.

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (3)

WR	13	Braylon Sanders (Jr.)	17	Jadon Jackson (Fr.)
WR	11	Dontario Drummond (Jr.)		Jonathan Mingo (Fr.)
SLOT	8	Elijah Moore (So.)	4	Tylan Knight (So.)
LT	72	Bryce Mathews (Jr.)	52	Michael Howard (Sr.)
LG	71	Royce Newman (Jr.)	68	Chandler Tuitt (Jr.)
C	61	Eli Johnson (Jr.)	71	Bryce Mathews (Jr.)
RG	**55**	**Ben Brown (So.)**		Jeremy James (Fr.)
RT	**67**	**Alex Givens (Sr.)**		Nick Broeker (Fr.)
TE	15	Octavious Cooley (Sr.)	7	Jason Pellerin (Sr.)
QB	2	Matt Corral (Fr.)	14	Grant Tisdale (Fr.)
RB	**22**	**Scottie Phillips (Sr.)**	26	Isaiah Woullard (So.)

DEFENSE (8)

Returning Starters in Bold

DE	89	Ryder Anderson (Jr.)	12	Austrian Robinson (Sr.)
NT	**95**	**Benito Jones (Sr.)**	94	Quentin Bivens (Fr.)
DE	**40**	**Josiah Coatney (Sr.)**	22	Tariqious Tisdale (Jr.)
OLB	**97**	**Qaadir Sheppard (Sr.)**	**3**	**Vernon Dasher (Sr.)**
ILB	**46**	**Mohamed Sanogo (Jr.)**	**17**	**Willie Hibbler (Sr.)**
ILB	10	Jacquez Jones (So.)		Lakia Henry (Jr.)
OLB	13	Sam Williams (Jr.)	99	Charles Wiley (Jr.)
CB	31	Jaylon Jones (Jr.)	20	Keidron Smith (So.)
CB	**15**	**Myles Hartsfield (Sr.)**	23	Jakorey Hawkins (Fr.)
S	2	Montrell Custis (Sr.)	8	C.J. Miller (Jr.)
S	5	Jon Haynes (Jr.)	**26**	**Jalen Julius (Sr.)**

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	92	Luke Logan (Jr.)	**KR**	31	Jaylon Jones (Jr.)
P	96	Mac Brown (Jr.)	**PR**	8	Elijah Moore (So.)

2018 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Jordan Ta'amu	418	266	3,918	19	8
Matt Corral	**22**	**16**	**239**	**2**	**1**

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD
Scottie Phillips	**153**	**928**	**6.1**	**12**
Isaiah Woullard	**84**	**428**	**5.1**	**4**
Jordan Ta'amu	116	342	2.9	6
Tylan Knight	**19**	**107**	**5.6**	**0**

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
A.J. Brown	85	1,320	15.5	6
DaMarkus Lodge	65	877	13.5	4
D.K. Metcalf	26	569	21.9	5
Elijah Moore	**36**	**398**	**11.1**	**2**

KICKING: **Luke Logan, 22-27 FGs, 111 points**

TACKLES: **Mohamed Sanogo, 112;** Zedrick Woods, 79

SACKS: Markel Winters, 4.0

INTERCEPTIONS: Ken Webster, 2; Zedrick Woods, 2

Returning Players in **Bold**

SCOUTING THE REBELS

OPPOSING COACHES SIZE UP OLE MISS

"The Rebels are in a better place than the last two years, but now is when the hurting starts on those NCAA penalties. Recruiting always pays off most two years down the road, and now they're replacing those superstar kids like A.J. Brown with the two- and three-star kids they had to take during the Freeze scandal. … We hear they're really excited about Matt Corral. They like his arm, and he's really competitive. He should fit well with what Rich Rodriguez wants to do if they can run the ball. Obviously they lose Brown and D.K. Metcalf, but that's the one position where they've recruited depth. They're going to struggle up front, and they're probably going to struggle running the ball. They don't have the personnel to do what RichRod wants. Will Jerrion Ealy play? If he chooses football over baseball, that could change a lot of things, because he'd be their best running back the first day of camp. Sustaining drives is going to be interesting. … Mike MacIntyre is a great coordinator, but he's stepping into a rough deal there. They're going to a 3-4 like Georgia and Tennessee, but how well does that personnel fit? … It will be interesting to watch Matt Luke as a head coach. He's hired two former head coaches to radically change their schemes on both sides of the ball. He's putting a lot on those two, and that could come back to bite him."

Mississippi State **Bulldogs**

National Forecast: **30** • SEC West Prediction: **5** • Projected Record: **7-5, 3-5 SEC**

Kylin Hill

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Joe Moorhead
Record at School: 8-5 (1 year)
Career Record: 46-18 (5 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Joe Moorhead
Defensive Coordinator: Bob Shoop
Location: Starkville, MS
Stadium: Davis Wade Stadium (61,337)

KEY BULLDOGS

DARRYL WILLIAMS, OL Imposing run blocker started 12 games at left guard last year but now moves to center to fill a big team need.

KYLIN HILL, RB Broke out with 211 yards against Kansas State and 126 against Auburn but was limited by a hamstring injury during the second half of the season.

ERROLL THOMPSON, LB Rising star at linebacker finished second on the nation's best defense in tackles (87), nine of them for a loss.

KEY LOSSES

JEFFERY SIMMONS, DT Two-time All-SEC pick leaves Starkville as one of the most decorated defensive players in school history.

MONTEZ SWEAT, DE Unanimous All-American who crashed MSU's top five for career sacks in just two seasons at the school.

NICK FITZGERALD, QB Left MSU with 13 school records and performed well in the biggest moments.

RISING STAR

Defensive tackle **FABIEN LOVETT** redshirted last season, but he rose to the top of the class while on the scout team. With senior Kendell Jones out in the spring, Lovett took first-team reps, and it wouldn't be a shock to see him in the starting lineup in the fall.

If the Joe Moorhead offense were correlated to the 26 letters of the alphabet, he estimates that he got letters A through M installed in his first season in Starkville. It was enough to go 8–4 in the regular season, but it wasn't nearly enough to be competitive in the team's four SEC losses. The 2018 Bulldogs averaged 7.5 yards per play in the eight wins and 3.6 yards per play in the four regular-season losses.

The four SEC teams that beat Mississippi State — Kentucky, Florida, LSU and Alabama — did compile a 44–10 record, with three of those four winning New Year's Six bowl games. But Moorhead promised that his Bulldogs would hold themselves to a championship standard, and winning championships starts with getting the 2019 team through the N through Z portions of his offense.

"We've got to be able to pass the ball effectively and explosively against every team on our schedule, not just some of the teams on the schedule," Moorhead says. "We have to do it on a weekly basis in a league that has a very small margin for error."

OFFENSE Much like last year, the Bulldogs have all of the pieces to run the ball effectively but have to prove their ability to throw it effectively.

Kylin Hill and Nick Gibson have proven their value as ball carriers, and the offensive line should be stout once again despite the loss of two quality starters. The Bulldogs moved veterans to two crucial positions — Darryl Williams from left guard to center and Stewart Reese to right guard from right tackle — to keep the interior of the line a formidable run-blocking unit.

MSU will also have a run threat at quarterback no matter whom it chooses. If it's the favorite, junior Keytaon Thompson, he comes in averaging 6.8 yards per carry in his career but also with a 47.4 completion percentage in the three games he played in predecessor Nick Fitzgerald's place. Redshirt freshman Jalen Mayden and true freshman Garrett Shrader are the other two options at quarterback.

The biggest question may be at wide receiver, where signs of both progress and need were evident a year ago. Stephen Guidry and Osirus Mitchell both eclipsed 400 yards — after no Bulldog topped the 300-yard mark in 2017 — but neither ranked among the top 30 in yards in the SEC.

DEFENSE The Bulldogs led the country in yards per play allowed thanks to a pair of elite defensive linemen and a pair of all-conference deep safeties. All of them are gone — as well as two other defensive line starters — but thanks to the depth that last year's unit displayed, there isn't much regression expected in Year 2 under coordinator Bob Shoop.

Chauncey Rivers, a former junior college transfer, will be asked to provide the edge presence lost by Montez Sweat's departure, and he is far from alone at defensive end. The interior of the line is where MSU has some-

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	vs. Louisiana #
Sept.	7	Southern Miss
Sept.	14	Kansas State
Sept.	21	Kentucky
Sept.	28	at Auburn
Oct.	12	at Tennessee
Oct.	19	LSU
Oct.	26	at Texas A&M
Nov.	2	at Arkansas
Nov.	16	Alabama
Nov.	23	Abilene Christian
Nov.	28	Ole Miss

#New Orleans

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 8-5, 4-4 SEC

Sept.	1	Stephen F. Austin	W	63-6
Sept.	8	at Kansas State	W	31-10
Sept.	15	Louisiana	W	56-10
Sept.	22	at Kentucky	L	7-28
Sept.	29	Florida	L	6-13
Oct.	6	Auburn	W	23-9
Oct.	20	at LSU	L	3-19
Oct.	27	Texas A&M	W	28-13
Nov.	3	Louisiana Tech	W	45-3
Nov.	10	at Alabama	L	0-24
Nov.	17	Arkansas	W	52-6
Nov.	22	at Ole Miss	W	35-3
Jan.	1	vs. Iowa #	L	22-27

#Outback Bowl

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	SEC	NATIONAL
Scoring	28.5 ppg	10	68
Rushing	223.6 ypg	2	20
Passing	173.8 ypg	13	112
Total	397.4 ypg	10	71
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**SEC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	13.2 ppg	1	2
Rushing	95.1 ypg	1	2
Passing	168.0 ypg	1	7
Total	263.1 ypg	1	1
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**SEC**	**NATIONAL**
+7	+0.54	5	26

2019 RECRUITS

1. Charles Cross, OT, Laurel, MS
2. Nathan Pickering, DT, Mount Olive, MS
3. De'Monte Russell, DE, Jackson, MS
4. Jarrian Jones, S, Brandon, MS
5. Garrett Shrader, QB, Charlotte, NC
6. Ani Izuchukwu, DE, Hendersonville, TN
7. Brandon Cunningham, OT, St. Martin, MS
8. Fred Peters, S, Columbia, MS*
9. LaQuinston Sharp, OG, Columbus, MS*
10. Collin Duncan, S, Montgomery, AL
11. JaVonta Payton, WR, Nashville, TN*
12. Kareem Walker, RB, Irvington, NJ*
13. Quinton Torbor, WR, Destrehan, LA
14. J.P. Purvis, S, Pelahatchie, MS
15. Nick Pendley, OG, Canton, GA
16. Lee Witherspoon, RB, Birmingham, AL
17. Kyziah Pruitt, WR, Macon, MS
18. Martin Emerson, CB, Pensacola, FL
19. Jack Harris, DE, Sumrall, MS
20. Dylan Lawrence, CB, George County, MS
21. Brevyn Jones, OT, Center Point, AL

*junior college transfer

Recruits ranked according to the 247SportsComposite

Hill: Butch Dill/AP

ADVANCED STATS

5 Factors: College Football's Most Important Stats

Field Position[1]		Rank
Offense	28.6	102
Defense	31.6	110
Margin	**-3.0**	**102**

Efficiency[2]		Rank
Offense	45.4%	30
Defense	34.7%	11
Margin	**+10.7%**	**7**

Explosiveness[3]		Rank
Offense	6.2	33
Defense	4.1	1
Margin	**+2.1**	**6**

Finishing Drives[4]		Rank
Offense	5.2	13
Defense	3.1	2
Margin	**+2.1**	**2**

Adjusted TO Margin[5]		Rank
Projected	3.6	43
Actual	7	23
Margin	**+3.4**	**30**

KEY: 1-Average starting field position by yard line; **2**-Rate of successful plays (gaining 50% of necessary yards on 1st down, 70% on 2nd down, 100% on 3rd down); **3**-Explosiveness=yards per play; **4**-Points per trip inside 40-yard line; **5**-TO margin accounting for "luck" • Advanced stats provided by Bill Connelly of SB Nation

NUMBERS TO KNOW

2.27

MSU averaged 6.83 yards per play on first downs (17th in FBS) and allowed just 4.56 (sixth). The resulting margin of plus-2.27 yards per play was sixth in the nation and second to only Alabama in the SEC.

2.1

MSU improved drastically in scoring situations in 2018. The Bulldogs averaged 0.8 more points per scoring opportunity (first downs inside the opponent's 40) and allowed 1.3 fewer points. This was a net gain of 2.1 points per trip, the best in the SEC and second best in FBS.

51.1

Of the 13 FBS teams to complete under 51.3 percent of their passes, Mississippi State was the only one to win more than seven games. Bulldog QBs completed just 51.1 percent — 45.8 percent (with one touchdown to seven interceptions) in five losses.

thing to prove. Linebacker play could make up for that, with no losses from last year's corps that shined in relative anonymity, most notably Erroll Thompson.

Safety was the strong suit in last year's secondary, but that title should belong to cornerback this year, after Cameron Dantzler was excellent his entire sophomore season and Maurice Smitherman developed throughout the fall. Marcus Murphy and Jaquarius Landrews may not be as good at blitzing as the safeties they are replacing, but their experience at Star (nickel back) last season should give MSU enough coverage skill to limit regression.

However, if MSU is going to be as strong in the middle of the field as it was last year, the linebackers will have to step up.

SPECIALISTS Jace Christmann made 11 of his final 13 field goal attempts and has yet to miss an extra point in his two years as MSU's kicker. He and holder Kody Schexnayder are points of stability in the kicking game. Schexnayder occasionally spelled Tucker Day in what was a bad punting season for all — 110th in the nation in punting average (38.9) — so MSU added two transfers, Corliss Waitman from South Alabama and Reed Bowman from Texas Tech, to have more options. MSU is also replacing a long snapper for the second year in a row but brought in junior college transfers at the position in each of the last two recruiting classes.

FINAL ANALYSIS Moorhead and the Bulldogs will need the aforementioned N through Z part of the offense to be fully implemented for the unit to take flight.

The depth from last year's defense should prevent the unit from cratering, but losing that amount of top-line talent is likely to have some impact. Even if that impact is small, the offense will have to pick up that slack and more if MSU is going to produce the program's first nine-win regular season since 2014.

This team will also have to get it done on the road, with just one home game during a five-game stretch in the middle of the season. The trips to Tennessee and at Arkansas are crucial, as winning both of them would give the Bulldogs some margin for error in road trips to Auburn and Texas A&M.

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (6)

WR	1	Stephen Guidry (Sr.)	3	Devonta Jason (So.)
WR	**87**	**Osirus Mitchell (Jr.)**	18	Cameron Gardner (Fr.)
WR	**2**	**Deddrick Thomas (Sr.)**	85	Austin Williams (So.)
LT	78	Tyre Phillips (Sr.)	69	Kwatrivous Johnson (Fr.)
LG	56	Dareuan Parker (Jr.)	75	Michael Story (Sr.)
C	**73**	**Darryl Williams (Sr.)**	71	James Jackson (So.)
RG	**51**	**Stewart Reese (Jr.)**	63	LaQuinston Sharp (Jr.)
RT	**55**	**Greg Eiland (Jr.)**	70	Tommy Champion (Sr.)
TE	82	Farrod Green (Sr.)	84	Dontea Jones (Jr.)
QB	10	Keytaon Thompson (Jr.)	14	Jalen Mayden (Fr.)
RB	**8**	**Kylin Hill (Jr.)**	21	Nick Gibson (Sr.)

DEFENSE (3)

Returning Starters in Bold

DE	5	Chauncey Rivers (Sr.)	43	Fletcher Adams (Sr.)
DT	92	Kendell Jones (Sr.)	54	Fabien Lovett (Fr.)
DT	97	Lee Autry (Sr.)	84	Jaden Crumedy (Fr.)
DE	42	Marquiss Spencer (Jr.)	52	Kobe Jones (Jr.)
LB	**40**	**Erroll Thompson (Jr.)**	50	Tim Washington (Sr.)
LB	6	Willie Gay Jr. (Jr.)	**10**	**Leo Lewis (Sr.)**
CB	**3**	**Cameron Dantzler (Jr.)**	16	Korey Charles (Jr.)
CB	8	Maurice Smitherman (Sr.)	13	Tyler Williams (So.)
NB	32	Brian Cole (Sr.)	38	Fred Peters (Jr.)
SS	11	Jaquarius Landrews (Sr.)	35	Landon Guidry (So.)
FS	7	Marcus Murphy (So.)	29	C.J. Morgan (Jr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	47	Jace Christmann (Jr.)	**KR**	9	Malik Dear (Sr.)
P	42	Tucker Day (Jr.)	**PR**	32	Brian Cole (Sr.)

2018 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Nick Fitzgerald	281	145	1,767	16	9
Keytaon Thompson	**39**	**18**	**458**	**6**	**1**

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD
Nick Fitzgerald	221	1,121	5.1	13
Kylin Hill	**117**	**734**	**6.3**	**4**
Aeris Williams	85	524	6.2	3
Keytaon Thompson	**24**	**226**	**9.4**	**4**

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Osirus Mitchell	**26**	**427**	**16.4**	**4**
Kylin Hill	**22**	**176**	**8.0**	**4**
Stephen Guidry	**19**	**440**	**23.2**	**3**
Deddrick Thomas	**19**	**256**	**13.5**	**2**

KICKING: **Jace Christmann, 12-16 FGs, 77 points**

TACKLES: Johnathan Abram, 99; **Erroll Thompson, 87**

SACKS: Montez Sweat, 11.5

INTERCEPTIONS: 5 players tied with 2

Returning Players in **Bold**

SCOUTING THE BULLDOGS

OPPOSING COACHES SIZE UP MISSISSIPPI STATE

"Joe Moorhead didn't forget how to coach offense, but they never figured out how to use Nick Fitzgerald to do what they wanted. Keytaon Thompson has to be the guy right now, but I wouldn't rule out the freshman (Garrett Shrader). … A lot of the pressure to win last year was because of the defense — they were so, so talented — and now it's gone. They're not empty, but that was a really special, talented group that could hurt you in every phase. You had NFL talent all over that defensive line. They have to build the front back up, but they might have the best linebackers in the SEC right now and they're all back. Erroll Thompson, Leo Lewis and Willie Gay Jr., all three of those guys could start for any program in our league. I'd be on the lookout for Bob Shoop to change up some things with their scheme. You can't call a defense the same way without that pressure up front. They're going more 4-2-5, more even front than odd. … The offensive line always does a great job with the run. They always have great looking personnel, big wide guys. … They're recruiting really well, better than a lot of coaches expected a non-Southern guy going into Mississippi to do so early. … They need to come out and show success throwing the ball. They need to show consistency and build in Year 2 to survive in the West. They've got a high ceiling and a low floor this year."

Texas A&M **Aggies**

National Forecast: **10** • SEC West Prediction: **3** • Projected Record: **8-4, 5-3 SEC**

Kellen Mond

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Jimbo Fisher
Record at School: 9-4 (1 year)
Career Record: 92-27 (9 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Darrell Dickey
Defensive Coordinator: Mike Elko
Location: College Station, TX
Stadium: Kyle Field (102,733)

KEY AGGIES

KELLEN MOND, QB Fourth in the SEC in total offense, Mond could be even more productive in his second year with Jimbo Fisher.

QUARTNEY DAVIS, WR Knee injuries forced Davis to sit out the '16 and '17 seasons, but he emerged as the Aggies' most reliable receiver in '18.

JUSTIN MADUBUIKE, DT An explosive threat from the interior line, Madubuike posted 40 tackles and 5.5 sacks as a sophomore.

KEY LOSSES

TRAYVEON WILLIAMS, RB Opted for early entry for the NFL Draft after rushing for a school-record 1,760 yards.

ERIK MCCOY, C The best lineman the last two seasons started 39 consecutive games.

JACE STERNBERGER, TE Earned All-America recognition after leading the nation's tight ends (min. 30 receptions) in yards per catch (17.3) and touchdowns (10).

RISING STAR

Freshman **BAYLOR CUPP** appears perfect for the key tight end role in Texas A&M's offense. The "Brock Gronk" — he's from Brock, Texas — is 6'6", 240 pounds, runs a 4.55 40, has a 36-inch vertical jump and great hands. Cupp figures to ease the loss of Jace Sternberger.

In its first season with coach Jimbo Fisher, Texas A&M posted nine victories, ended years of futility against LSU, finished second in the SEC West and stopped a three-year losing streak in bowl games.

That was more than enough for Fisher's first year in College Station to be considered a success. Defining success in his second year, however, might be more difficult.

Quarterback Kellen Mond, a proven group of receivers, a relatively experienced offensive line and a potentially dominant defensive front return to form the nucleus of another strong team.

Yet, holes must be filled at running back, tight end, linebacker and in the secondary. Further, the Aggies must negotiate a treacherous schedule that features powerful Clemson, Alabama, Georgia and LSU. Three of those games are on the road.

OFFENSE Mond aims to make the progression from effective quarterback to one of the SEC's elite. Last season, he ranked fourth in the SEC in total offense with 3,581 yards. He was at times spectacular and at times frustrating. More consistency is needed in his second season in Fisher's offense.

The wide receiver corps returns intact, led by Quartney Davis, who had 45 catches and seven touchdowns. Jhamon Ausbon is steady, and Kendrick Rogers has a flair for spectacular grabs but has been inconsistent.

All-American Jace Sternberger's departure to the NFL left a void at tight end. Heralded true freshman Baylor Cupp could be his immediate successor. If not, sophomore Glenn Beal likely gets the call.

The Aggies look to replace All-SEC running back Trayveon Williams with sophomore Jashaun Corbin, who showed an explosive dimension in a reserve role. Also, 230-pounder Cordarrian Richardson, a transfer from UCF, will add a boost of power to the running game.

They will operate behind an offensive line that paved the way for Williams to gain a school-record 1,760 yards. Junior tackles Dan Moore Jr. and Carson Green and junior guard Jared Hocker are proven. Ryan McCollum, who made seven starts at guard, will shift to center to replace standout Erik McCoy. Redshirt freshmen Marcus Jenkins and Luke Matthews or five-star freshman Kenyon Green vie for the other guard spot.

DEFENSE The task facing defensive coordinator Mike Elko is maintaining a run defense that was among the best the country in 2018 while upgrading a pass defense that ranked 12th in the SEC.

Defensive tackle Justin Madubuike, who posted 5.5 sacks and 10.5 tackles for a loss, is the only full-time returning starter among the front seven. Yet Madubuike still has a lot of help on the front four. Sophomore tackle Bobby Brown III seems ready for a breakout year, and Jayden Peevy would start almost anywhere else.

More questions exist at defensive end, though 6'5", 272-pound junior Micheal Clemons has recovered from a foot injury that sidelined him last season. He returned to

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	Texas State
Sept.	7	at Clemson
Sept.	14	Lamar
Sept.	21	Auburn
Sept.	28	vs. Arkansas #
Oct.	12	Alabama
Oct.	19	at Ole Miss
Oct.	26	Mississippi State
Nov.	2	UTSA
Nov.	16	South Carolina
Nov.	23	at Georgia
Nov.	30	at LSU

#Arlington, TX

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 9-4, 5-3 SEC

Aug.	30	Northwestern State		W	59-7
Sept.	8	Clemson		L	26-28
Sept.	15	UL Monroe		W	48-10
Sept.	22	at Alabama		L	23-45
Sept.	29	vs. Arkansas #		W	24-17
Oct.	6	Kentucky	(ot)	W	20-14
Oct.	13	at South Carolina		W	26-23
Oct.	27	at Mississippi State		L	13-28
Nov.	3	at Auburn		L	24-28
Nov.	10	Ole Miss		W	38-24
Nov.	17	UAB		W	41-20
Nov.	24	LSU	(ot)	W	74-72
Dec.	31	vs. NC State %		W	52-13

#Arlington, TX %Gator Bowl

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	SEC	NATIONAL
Scoring	36.0 ppg	4	19
Rushing	219.0 ypg	3	21
Passing	252.6 ypg	5	44
Total	471.6 ypg	4	15
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**SEC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	25.3 ppg	8	47
Rushing	95.2 ypg	2	3
Passing	253.2 ypg	12	98
Total	348.4 ypg	7	32
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**SEC**	**NATIONAL**
-7	-0.54	13	110

2019 RECRUITS

1. Kenyon Green, OT, Humble, TX
2. Demarvin Leal, DT, San Antonio, TX
3. Baylor Cupp, TE, Brock, TX
4. Dylan Wright, WR, Mesquite, TX
5. Brian Williams, S, Dallas, TX
6. Demani Richardson, S, Waxahachie, TX
7. Erick Young, CB, Richmond, TX
8. Isaiah Spiller, RB, Spring, TX
9. Kam Brown, WR, Colleyville, TX
10. Elijah Blades, CB, Pasadena, CA*
11. Braedon Mowry, DE, Katy, TX
12. Andre White Jr., LB, Harrisburg, PA
13. Derick Hunter, DE, Fort Myers, FL
14. Josh Ellison, DT, College Station, TX
15. Ke'Shun Brown, LB, Montgomery, AL
16. Jalen Wydermyer, TE, Dickinson, TX
17. Kenyon Jackson, WR, Loganville, GA
18. Layden Robinson, C, Manvel, TX
19. Zach Calzada, QB, Buford, GA
20. Adarious Jones, DT, Virginia Beach, VA
21. Chase Lane, WR, Houston, TX
22. Tarian Lee Jr., LB, Tallahassee, FL
23. Ainias Smith, ATH, Sugar Land, TX
24. Blake Trainor, OT, Hallsville, TX
25. Chris Russell, LB, Dyersburg, TN
26. R.J. Orebo, LB, Dayton, TX
27. Caden Davis, K, Coppell, TX

*junior college transfer

Recruits ranked according to the 247SportsComposite

Harrison McClary

ADVANCED STATS

5 Factors: College Football's Most Important Stats

Field Position[1]		Rank
Offense	29.6	74
Defense	27.4	19
Margin	**+2.2**	**42**

Efficiency[2]		Rank
Offense	45.9%	24
Defense	37.9%	27
Margin	**+8.0%**	**17**

Explosiveness[3]		Rank
Offense	6.3	23
Defense	5.8	73
Margin	**+0.5**	**49**

Finishing Drives[4]		Rank
Offense	4.5	80
Defense	4.7	77
Margin	**-0.2**	**81**

Adjusted TO Margin[5]		Rank
Projected	-1.5	84
Actual	-7	111
Margin	**-5.5**	**115**

KEY: **1**-Average starting field position by yard line; **2**-Rate of successful plays (gaining 50% of necessary yards on 1st down, 70% on 2nd down, 100% on 3rd down); **3**-Explosiveness=yards per play; **4**-Points per trip inside 40-yard line; **5**-TO margin accounting for "luck" • Advanced stats provided by Bill Connelly of SB Nation

NUMBERS TO KNOW

-8

The Aggies had a turnover margin of minus-8 in their four losses and plus-1 in their nine wins. The main difference was on defense: A&M didn't force a single turnover in those four losses.

4.7

The Aggies' scoring defense improved from 30.7 points per game to 25.3 in 2018. Now just imagine if they had played good red zone defense. A&M opponents averaged 4.7 points per scoring opportunity (first downs inside the 40), 77th overall and 12th in the SEC.

20.4

The A&M defense was feisty. The Aggies ranked fifth in havoc rate (tackles for a loss, passes defensed and forced fumbles divided by total plays) at 20.4 percent. TFLs were the driver: The Aggies had 100 of them, 14th in FBS.

practice late in the year, and reports were he was virtually unblockable. Sophomore Tyree Johnson showed flashes as a backup in his debut season and drew praise throughout the spring. Five-star freshman Demarvin Leal is expected to make an immediate impact, too.

There is much more concern at linebacker, where junior Buddy Johnson, with four career starts and 47 career tackles, has the most experience. Sophomore Anthony Hines III has great ability but is coming back from a knee injury that sidelined him almost all of last season. Ikenna Okeke, a converted safety, is also coming back from injury.

The Aggies addressed the depth issue at linebacker by bringing in five freshmen and shifting Aaron Hansford from tight end.

On the back end, cornerbacks Debione Renfro and Charles Oliver and safety Derrick Tucker must rebound from subpar performances. The Aggies can glean encouragement from junior cornerback Myles Jones showing progress late in the season and sophomore safety Leon O'Neal Jr. having a strong showing in the Gator Bowl. Also, cornerback Clifford Chattman is finally available after missing the last two seasons. Help is also on the way from highly ranked recruits.

SPECIALISTS All-America punter Braden Mann set several NCAA records en route to the Ray Guy Award. Sophomore kicker Seth Small isn't as reliable. He made his first five attempts but was erratic thereafter. Roshauud Paul is solid on punt returns, while Corbin averaged 30.1 yards on kickoff returns. Corbin's listed as a starting running back, so he may give up the role.

FINAL ANALYSIS Mond should be better in his second season under Fisher. Consequently, the offense should be improved, too. Though defensive concerns are real, the Aggies likely will be fine if linebackers Johnson and Hines stay healthy. Improvement is expected in the secondary because … well, because it couldn't get much worse. But there is an influx of talent there, and help from a more explosive pass rush is expected. The Aggies could legitimately have a stronger team. However, duplicating last year's nine wins will be difficult against perhaps the nation's most challenging schedule.

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (7)

WR	**1**	**Quartney Davis (Jr.)**	14	Camron Buckley (Jr.)
WR	**2**	**Jhamon Ausbon (Jr.)**	9	Hezekiah Jones (Jr.)
WR	13	Kendrick Rogers (Jr.)	82	Caleb Chapman (Fr.)
LT	**65**	**Dan Moore Jr. (Jr.)**	74	Kellen Diesch (Jr.)
LG	**73**	**Jared Hocker (Jr.)**	76	Colton Prater (Sr.)
C	**77**	**Ryan McCollum (Jr.)**	60	Barton Clement (Fr.)
RG	79	Marcus Jenkins (Fr.)	75	Luke Matthews (Fr.)
RT	**54**	**Carson Green (Jr.)**	72	Colten Blanton (Fr.)
TE	88	Baylor Cupp (Fr.)	86	Glenn Beal (So.)
QB	**11**	**Kellen Mond (Jr.)**	8	Connor Blumrick (So.)
RB	7	Jashaun Corbin (So.)	25	Cordarrian Richardson (So.)

DEFENSE (4)

Returning Starters in Bold

DE	3	Tyree Johnson (So.)	8	Demarvin Leal (Fr.)
DT	**52**	**Justin Madubuike (Jr.)**	92	Jayden Peevy (Jr.)
DT	5	Bobby Brown III (So.)	90	TD Moton (Jr.)
DE	2	Micheal Clemons (Sr.)	40	Tyree Wilson (So.)
OLB	1	Buddy Johnson (Jr.)	58	Braden White (Jr.)
ILB	19	Anthony Hines III (So.)	56	Keeath Magee II (Jr.)
NB	22	Clifford Chattman (Jr.)	27	Roney Elam (Sr.)
CB	10	Myles Jones (Jr.)	**21**	**Charles Oliver (Sr.)**
CB	**29**	**Debione Renfro (Jr.)**	22	Clifford Chattman (Jr.)
S	9	Leon O'Neal Jr. (So.)	14	Keldrick Carper (Jr.)
S	**4**	**Derrick Tucker (Jr.)**	11	Larry Pryor (Sr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	47	Seth Small (So.)	**KR**	7	Jashaun Corbin (So.)
P	34	Braden Mann (Sr.)	**PR**	6	Roshauud Paul (Jr.)

2018 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Kellen Mond	**415**	**238**	**3,107**	**24**	**9**
Nick Starkel	22	15	169	1	0

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD
Trayveon Williams	271	1,760	6.5	18
Kellen Mond	**149**	**474**	**3.2**	**7**
Jashaun Corbin	**61**	**346**	**5.7**	**1**
Kwame Etwi	20	129	6.5	1

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Jace Sternberger	48	832	17.3	10
Quartney Davis	**45**	**585**	**13.0**	**7**
Camron Buckley	**34**	**474**	**13.9**	**1**
Jhamon Ausbon	**31**	**375**	**12.1**	**0**

KICKING: **Seth Small, 20-28 FGs, 100 points**

TACKLES: Otaro Alaka, 79; Tyrel Dodson, 70

SACKS: Keke Kingsley, 7.0; Landis Durham, 6.5

INTERCEPTIONS: Donovan Wilson, 2

Returning Players in **Bold**

SCOUTING THE AGGIES

OPPOSING COACHES SIZE UP TEXAS A&M

"Kellen Mond should be a lot better this season, and he wasn't bad at all last year. That's just the jump you expect with Jimbo Fisher. They basically get everyone back at receiver. They're a big, athletic group and there's a lot of them. They can hit you at four or five spots on a given play, that's the leftover spread roster from Kevin Sumlin. ... They really don't have a tight end, and that's the safety valve for Jimbo quarterbacks. Jace Sternberger made them go last year, he was their Nick O'Leary. They want to build that position up big time. The big freshman (Baylor) Cupp is going to be that guy. He could be a breakout player because of the amount of attention the receivers will command. Watch the offensive line, it could get rough there as they keep transitioning over to Fisher's offense. (Former OL coach) Jim Turner was a big, big loss. … They need to replace Trayveon Williams. Look out for the UCF transfer (Cordarrian Richardson), but that's a pretty deep group. … What a job Mike Elko did last year. They got better in the middle of the field but then lost those guys. They have to do it all over again this year. … The way they finished last season and with Mond, everyone is really hot on them right now, but this is still a 2020 team. They're not Georgia or Alabama or LSU deep. They're not going to sneak up on anyone. But they're not as far off as we want to admit."

Sun Belt *Preview*

East	*Predicted Order of Finish*	West

1 *Appalachian State* **MOUNTAINEERS** 9-4, 6-2 Sun Belt

2 *Troy* **TROJANS** 8-4, 6-2 Sun Belt

3 *Georgia Southern* **EAGLES** 7-5, 5-3 Sun Belt

4 *Georgia State* **PANTHERS** 3-9, 2-6 Sun Belt

5 *Coastal Carolina* **CHANTICLEERS** 3-9, 1-7 Sun Belt

1 *Arkansas State* **RED WOLVES** 8-5, 6-2 Sun Belt

2 *Louisiana* **RAGIN' CAJUNS** 7-5, 5-3 Sun Belt

3 *ULM* **WARHAWKS** 5-7, 4-4 Sun Belt

4 *Texas State* **BOBCATS** 4-8, 3-5 Sun Belt

5 *South Alabama* **JAGUARS** 3-9, 2-6 Sun Belt

Sun Belt Championship: **Appalachian State over Arkansas State**

Games to Watch

AUG. 31
GEORGIA SOUTHERN AT LSU
The last Sun Belt team that made the trip to Tiger Stadium — Troy in 2017 — picked up a win. Can the Eagles' option attack handle the LSU D?

AUG. 31
SMU AT ARKANSAS STATE
The Red Wolves welcome the high-powered SMU Mustangs to Jonesboro for an intriguing Week 1 matchup.

AUG. 31
LOUISIANA VS. MISS. STATE
Year 2 of the Billy Napier era kicks off against Mississippi State in New Orleans. The Bulldogs are rebuilding a bit, but this is still a huge challenge.

SEPT. 21
APP. STATE AT NORTH CAROLINA
New Mountaineers coach Eli Drinkwitz is well aware of the Tar Heels from his days at NC State. This is a great spot for an App State upset.

SEPT. 28
ARKANSAS STATE AT TROY
This figures to be the toughest Sun Belt test for Arkansas State, which does not play East Division favorite Appalachian State.

OCT. 5
TROY AT MISSOURI
The Trojans will be looking to knock off a Power 5 foe the third straight season after winning at LSU in 2017 and Nebraska in 2018.

App State Athletics; Arkansas State Athletics

2019 Unit Rankings

	QB	RB	WR/TE	OL	DL	LB	DB
APPALACHIAN STATE	1	1	2	1	4	1	5
ARKANSAS STATE	8	4	1	5	1	8	2
COASTAL CAROLINA	10	7	7	10	7	9	10
GEORGIA STATE	6	8	3	8	10	10	9
GEORGIA SOUTHERN	4	5	10	6	3	4	1
LOUISIANA	5	2	4	2	8	5	6
SOUTH ALABAMA	9	6	8	9	6	7	8
TEXAS STATE	7	10	6	7	9	2	3
TROY	2	3	5	3	2	3	4
ULM	3	9	9	4	5	6	7

Zac Thomas, Appalachian State

Recruiting by School

1. Louisiana
2. Troy
3. Arkansas State
4. Appalachian State
5. Georgia State
6. Georgia Southern
7. South Alabama
8. Coastal Carolina
9. ULM
10. Texas State

2019 Bowl Projections

New Orleans Bowl: Appalachian State vs. Marshall

Camellia Bowl: Troy vs. Western Michigan

Cure Bowl: Georgia Southern vs. SMU

Dollar General Bowl: Arkansas State vs. Toledo

Arizona Bowl: Louisiana vs. Hawaii

Kirk Merritt, Arkansas State

Sun Belt Coordinator Carousel

Appalachian State: Offense
New: Eli Drinkwitz
Old: Shawn Clark, Frank Ponce

Appalachian State: Defense
New: Ted Roof
Old: Brian Brown, Dale Jones

Arkansas State: Offense
New: Keith Heckendorf
Old: Buster Faulkner

Arkansas State: Defense
New: David Duggan
Old: Joe Cauthen

Coastal Carolina: Offense
New: Newland Isaac, Willy Korn
Old: Jamey Chadwell

Georgia State: Offense
New: Brad Glenn
Old: Travis Trickett

Texas State: Offense
New: Bob Stitt
Old: Zak Kuhr

Texas State: Defense
New: Archie McDaniel, Zac Spavital
Old: Chris Woods

Troy: Offense
New: Ryan Pugh
Old: Matt Moore, Sean Reagan

Troy: Defense
New: Brandon Hall
Old: Vic Koenning

OCT. 9
APP. STATE AT LOUISIANA
Appalachian State is 5–0 vs. UL since joining the Sun Belt — and none of the games has been decided by fewer than 10 points.

OCT. 17
LOUISIANA AT ARKANSAS STATE
The two top teams in the West Division will be meet on ESPNU on a Thursday night. UL edged the Red Wolves 47–43 last fall.

OCT. 31
GEORGIA SO. AT APP. STATE
Georgia Southern rolled up 277 yards on the ground in last season's 34–14 win over the Mountaineers. The rematch in Boone will be fun.

NOV. 9
APP. STATE AT SOUTH CAROLINA
The Mountaineers have made some P5 teams sweat in recent years, with OT losses at Penn State (2018) and Tennessee (2016.)

NOV. 30
APP. STATE AT TROY
Georgia Southern might have something to say about it, but the East Division title figures to be on the line in Troy in the regular-season finale.

NOV. 30
ULM AT LOUISIANA
Louisiana has won nine of the past 11 in this in-state rivalry, but the Warhawks are making big strides under coach Matt Viator.

Dan Ellington, Georgia State

Sun Belt Returning Leaders

Passing	ATT	COMP	PCT	YDS	TD	INT	AVG/G
Caleb Evans, ULM	374	231	61.8	2,869	16	12	239.1
Dan Ellington, Georgia State	292	174	59.6	2,119	12	5	192.6
Zac Thomas, Appalachian State	254	159	62.6	2,039	21	6	169.9

Rushing	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD	LONG	AVG/G
Darrynton Evans, Appalachian State	179	1,187	6.6	7	79	91.3
B.J. Smith, Troy	219	1,186	5.4	13	78	91.2
Trey Ragas, Louisiana	207	1,181	5.7	8	47	84.4

Receiving	REC	YDS	AVG	TD	LONG	AVG/G
Kirk Merritt, Arkansas State	83	1,005	12.1	7	73	77.3
Corey Sutton, Appalachian State	44	773	17.6	10	90	59.5
RJ Turner, ULM	36	526	14.6	1	57	47.8

Tackles: Bryan London II, Texas State (109); Nikolas Daniels, Texas State (108)
Sacks: William Bradley-King, Arkansas State (6.0), Jordan Fehr, Appalachian State (5.5)
Interceptions: Four players tied with 4

2018 Sun Belt Standings

EAST	SUN BELT	OVERALL	WEST	SUN BELT	OVERALL
Appalachian State	7-1	11-2	Louisiana	5-3	7-7
Troy	7-1	10-3	Arkansas State	5-3	8-5
Georgia Southern	6-2	10-3	ULM	4-4	6-6
Coastal Carolina	2-6	5-7	South Alabama	2-6	3-9
Georgia State	1-7	2-10	Texas State	1-7	3-9

2018 Bowl Results

Arizona Bowl: Nevada 16, Arkansas State 13 (OT)

Camellia Bowl: Georgia Southern 23, Eastern Michigan 21

Dollar General Bowl: Troy 42, Buffalo 32

Cure Bowl: Tulane 41, Louisiana 24

New Orleans Bowl: Appalachian State 45, Middle Tennessee 13

2018 Sun Belt Team Stats & Rankings

Offense

	SCORING	RUSH	PASS	TOTAL
Appalachian State	37.3 (1)	240.4 (2)	190.6 (7)	431.0 (2)
Arkansas State	30.3 (5)	184.8 (5)	281.5 (1)	466.2 (1)
Coastal Carolina	26.7 (6)	198.7 (4)	180.7 (9)	379.3 (6)
Georgia Southern	30.5 (4)	266.2 (1)	79.0 (10)	345.2 (9)
Georgia State	23.9 (9)	171.4 (7)	206.8 (4)	378.2 (7)
Louisiana	31.9 (2)	218.7 (3)	205.6 (5)	424.3 (3)
South Alabama	24.2 (8)	152.0 (9)	203.3 (6)	355.3 (8)
Texas State	19.8 (10)	148.1 (10)	182.2 (8)	330.3 (10)
Troy	30.7 (3)	174.1 (6)	215.3 (3)	389.4 (5)
ULM	26.6 (7)	167.3 (8)	247.5 (2)	414.8 (4)

Defense

	SCORING	RUSH	PASS	TOTAL
Appalachian State	15.5 (1)	125.9 (1)	162.1 (1)	288.0 (1)
Arkansas State	25.6 (4)	191.8 (6)	177.8 (2)	369.5 (4)
Coastal Carolina	33.2 (7)	244.4 (9)	206.4 (4)	450.8 (9)
Georgia Southern	21.5 (2)	140.5 (3)	216.5 (5)	357.1 (3)
Georgia State	37.4 (9)	251.0 (10)	238.5 (8)	489.5 (10)
Louisiana	34.2 (8)	219.1 (8)	216.8 (6)	435.9 (7)
South Alabama	38.8 (10)	203.0 (7)	245.7 (9)	448.7 (8)
Texas State	27.7 (5)	182.3 (4)	201.6 (3)	383.9 (5)
Troy	22.0 (3)	128.7 (2)	219.2 (7)	347.9 (2)
ULM	31.8 (6)	182.7 (5)	247.1 (10)	429.8 (6)

ALL-SUN BELT TEAM

First-Team Offense

QB	**Zac Thomas**	6-1	200	Jr.	Appalachian State
RB	**Darrynton Evans**	5-11	191	Jr.	Appalachian State
RB	**B.J. Smith**	5-9	203	Sr.	Troy
AP	**Trey Ragas**	5-11	227	Jr.	Louisiana
WR	**Kirk Merritt**	6-0	215	Sr.	Arkansas State
WR	**Corey Sutton**	6-3	205	Jr.	Appalachian State
TE	**Javonis Isaac**	6-2	248	Jr.	Arkansas State
C	**Noah Hannon**	6-1	270	Jr.	Appalachian State
OL	**Robert Hunt**	6-5	310	Sr.	Louisiana
OL	**Kevin Dotson**	6-4	315	Sr.	Louisiana
OL	**Victor Johnson**	6-5	296	Sr.	Appalachian State
OL	**Kirk Kelley**	6-4	320	Sr.	Troy

Trey Ragas, Louisiana

Tyree Turner, South Alabama

First-Team Defense

DL	**William Bradley-King**	6-4	248	Jr.	Arkansas State
DL	**Raymond Johnson III**	6-3	240	Jr.	Georgia Southern
DL	**Forrest Merrill**	6-1	338	Jr.	Arkansas State
DL	**Tyree Turner**	6-1	285	Jr.	South Alabama
LB	**Akeem Davis-Gaither**	6-2	208	Sr.	Appalachian State
LB	**Bryan London II**	6-2	232	Sr.	Texas State
LB	**Carlton Martial**	5-10	206	So.	Troy
CB	**Monquavion Brinson**	5-11	180	Sr.	Georgia Southern
CB	**Kindle Vildor**	5-11	190	Sr.	Georgia Southern
S	**Desmond Franklin**	6-0	200	Sr.	Appalachian State
S	**Josh Thomas**	6-0	206	Sr.	Appalachian State

First-Team Specialists

K	**Tyler Bass**	5-10	180	Sr.	Georgia Southern
P	**Cody Grace**	6-2	228	Sr.	Arkansas State
KR	**Raymond Calais**	5-9	180	Sr.	Louisiana
PR	**Hutch White**	6-1	195	Sr.	Texas State

SECOND-TEAM OFFENSE

QB	**Caleb Evans**	6-2	210	Sr.	ULM
RB	**Elijah Mitchell**	5-11	221	Jr.	Louisiana
RB	**Marcel Murray**	5-11	197	So.	Arkansas State
AP	**Tra Minter**	5-9	200	Jr.	South Alabama
WR	**Kawaan Baker**	6-1	210	So.	South Alabama
WR	**Ja'Marcus Bradley**	6-1	195	Sr.	Louisiana
TE	**Collin Reed**	6-4	248	Sr.	Appalachian State
C	**Aaron Brewer**	6-3	270	Sr.	Texas State
OL	**Hunter Atkinson**	6-5	295	Sr.	Georgia State
OL	**T.J. Fiailoa**	6-4	360	Jr.	ULM
OL	**J.L. Gaston**	6-4	295	Sr.	Troy
OL	**Shamarious Gilmore**	6-3	295	Jr.	Georgia State

SECOND-TEAM DEFENSE

DL	**Antione Barker**	6-3	265	Sr.	Troy
DL	**Jarvis Hayes**	6-4	241	Sr.	Troy
DL	**Bennie Higgins**	6-0	276	Sr.	Louisiana
DL	**Tarron Jackson**	6-2	265	Jr.	Coastal Carolina
LB	**Jacques Boudreaux**	6-1	229	Sr.	Louisiana
LB	**Nikolas Daniels**	6-0	235	Sr.	Texas State
LB	**Jordan Fehr**	6-3	226	Sr.	Appalachian State
CB	**Terence Dunlap**	5-11	184	Jr.	Troy
CB	**Jerry Jacobs**	5-11	204	Jr.	Arkansas State
S	**Darreon Jackson**	6-0	205	Sr.	Arkansas State
S	**Tyler Murray**	6-1	209	Jr.	Troy

SECOND-TEAM SPECIALISTS

K	**Tyler Sumpter**	5-10	221	Jr.	Troy
P	**Brandon Wright**	5-10	180	Sr.	Georgia State
KR	**Tra Minter**	5-9	200	Jr.	South Alabama
PR	**Wesley Kennedy III**	5-10	175	Jr.	Georgia Southern

Tra Minter
South Alabama

Shai Werts
Georgia Southern

CJ Marable
Coastal Carolina

Terence Dunlap
Troy

THIRD-TEAM OFFENSE

QB	**Shai Werts**	5-11	200	Jr.	Georgia Southern
RB	**Raymond Calais**	5-9	180	Sr.	Louisiana
RB	**CJ Marable**	5-10	190	Jr.	Coastal Carolina
AP	**Wesley Kennedy III**	5-10	175	Jr.	Georgia Southern
WR	**Omar Bayless**	6-3	207	Sr.	Arkansas State
WR	**Cornelius McCoy**	5-11	180	So.	Georgia State
TE	**Josh Pederson**	6-5	227	Jr.	ULM
C	**Cole Prudhomme**	6-3	293	Sr.	Louisiana
OL	**Tristan Crowder**	6-4	336	Sr.	Troy
OL	**Brian Miller**	6-3	285	So.	Georgia Southern
OL	**Bobby Reynolds**	6-2	281	Sr.	ULM
OL	**Jacob Still**	6-1	296	Jr.	Arkansas State

THIRD-TEAM DEFENSE

DL	**Ishmael Davis**	6-2	260	Sr.	Texas State
DL	**Zi'Yon Hill**	6-2	283	So.	Louisiana
DL	**Kevin Thurmon**	6-3	298	Sr.	Arkansas State
DL	**Larance Shaw**	5-11	277	Sr.	ULM
LB	**Tajhea Chambers**	6-2	240	Jr.	Arkansas State
LB	**Frankie Griffin**	6-0	205	Sr.	Texas State
LB	**Chauncey Manac**	6-3	252	Jr.	Louisiana
CB	**Jarron Morris**	5-9	158	So.	Texas State
CB	**Corey Straughter**	5-10	165	Jr.	ULM
S	**B.J. Edmonds**	6-0	204	Sr.	Arkansas State
S	**Anthony J. Taylor**	5-8	185	Sr.	Texas State

THIRD-TEAM SPECIALISTS

K	**Massimo Biscardi**	5-11	195	So.	Coastal Carolina
P	**Tyler Sumpter**	5-10	221	Jr.	Troy
KR	**Darrynton Evans**	5-11	191	Jr.	Appalachian State
PR	**Thomas Hennigan**	6-1	206	Jr.	Appalachian State

Georgia State Athletics; Louisiana Athletics; Turner: AP; Georgia Southern Athletics; Troy Athletics; Coastal Carolina Athletics

Appalachian State **Mountaineers**

National Forecast: **51** • Sun Belt East Prediction: **1** • Projected Record: **9-4, 6-2 Sun Belt**

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	East Tennessee State
Sept.	7	Charlotte
Sept.	21	at North Carolina
Sept.	28	Coastal Carolina
Oct.	9	at UL Lafayette
Oct.	19	UL Monroe
Oct.	26	at South Alabama
Oct.	31	Georgia Southern
Nov.	9	at South Carolina
Nov.	16	at Georgia State
Nov.	23	Texas State
Nov.	30	at Troy

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 11-2, 7-1 SBC

Sept.	1	at Penn State (ot)	L	38-45
Sept.	8	at Charlotte	W	45-9
Sept.	22	Gardner-Webb	W	72-7
Sept.	29	South Alabama	W	52-7
Oct.	9	at Arkansas State	W	35-9
Oct.	20	Louisiana	W	27-17
Oct.	25	at Georgia Southern	L	14-34
Nov.	3	at Coastal Carolina	W	23-7
Nov.	10	at Texas State	W	38-7
Nov.	17	Georgia State	W	45-17
Nov.	24	Troy	W	21-10
Dec.	1	Louisiana #	W	30-19
Dec.	15	vs. Middle Tenn. %	W	45-13

#SBC Championship %New Orleans Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. David Baldwin-Griffin, QB, Compton, CA
2. Raykwon Anderson, CB, Folkston, GA
3. Brendan Harrington, LB, Pittsboro, NC
4. Larry Dowdy, OT, Belmont, NC
5. Emmanuel Jenkins, CB, Canton, GA
6. Jourdan Heilig, LB, Concord, NC
7. Ricky Kofoed, TE, Charlotte, NC
8. Lyle Hiers, OT, Lake Wales, FL
9. Christian Wells, WR, Fort Lauderdale, FL
10. Tre Caldwell, CB, Greensboro, NC

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	SBC	NATIONAL
Scoring	37.3 ppg	1	16
Rushing	240.4 ypg	2	14
Passing	190.6 ypg	7	100
Total	431.0 ypg	2	37
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**SBC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	15.5 ppg	1	4
Rushing	125.9 ypg	1	21
Passing	162.1 ypg	1	5
Total	288.0 ypg	1	6
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**SBC**	**NATIONAL**
+6	+0.46	3	30

STAT CORNER

0.8

You simply couldn't gash the Mountaineers deep: App State allowed just 0.8 gains per game of 30-plus yards, first in FBS.

OFFENSE First-year coach Eli Drinkwitz takes over a unit that returns nine starters, including seven All-Sun Belt players and the league's Offensive Player of the Year, quarterback Zac Thomas. Expectations are high for a group loaded with talent and experience, and if the Mountaineers can quickly adjust to a new scheme, they should put one of the nation's most productive attacks on the field yet again.

How that production manifests is likely to change from App State's run-heavy style of the past. Drinkwitz-led offenses at NC State ranked in the top 20 nationally in pass attempts and in the top 10 in completions over the past two seasons.

After completing 62.6 percent of his attempts for 2,039 yards with 21 touchdowns and six interceptions in his first year as a starter, Thomas should become even more efficient this season with all of his top weapons back. Corey Sutton serves as the deep threat, while Malik Williams and Thomas Hennigan work the inside. Expect speedster Jalen Virgil to take on a bigger role.

As always, the Mountaineers will have an elite running back leading a talented stable. Darrynton Evans returns after rushing for 1,187 yards and seven TDs behind a line that has four starters back.

DEFENSE Veteran coach Ted Roof takes over as coordinator of a defense that returns six starters from a group that ranked sixth nationally in total defense last season and fourth in points allowed at 15.5 points per game. Roof is sticking with the 3-4 defense that fueled Appalachian State's successful transition to FBS, adjusting his philosophy to the personnel he inherited on the App State roster.

Senior Akeem Davis-Gaither led the Mountaineers in tackles with 105 — 10 for a loss — last season, and he will be joined by Jordan Fehr (86 tackles, 5.5 sacks) and Noel Cook (75 tackles, 11.5 for a loss) in a linebacking corps that returns three of four starters.

In the secondary, seniors Desmond Franklin and Josh Thomas (four interceptions apiece last season) might have their hands full as App State breaks in two new starting cornerbacks after the departures of first-team selection Clifton Duck and Tae Hayes.

The Mountaineers are plenty experienced up front, but the biggest loss on the entire roster could be nose guard MyQuon Stout, whose 6'1", 280-pound frame left his teammates free to attack.

SPECIALISTS Chandler Staton was 12-of-16 on field goal attempts last season, while Clayton Howell should contend for all-conference honors after averaging 43.6 yards per punt last season. In the return game, Evans has two career kick returns for touchdowns and is always a threat to take one to the house.

FINAL ANALYSIS Drinkwitz couldn't have inherited a better situation for his debut as head coach, taking over an experienced roster that will be favored to win the Sun Belt and could challenge for the Group of 5's New Year's Six bowl bid.

The Mountaineers will be exciting offensively as Drinkwitz adds his own wrinkles, and they should maintain their aggressive edge on defense to help two new corners get up to speed.

The schedule sets up nicely with a winnable game at North Carolina on Sept. 21 and a Nov. 9 date with South Carolina, giving App State a real opportunity to make noise nationally.

Zac Thomas

"They have really good talent and team speed. As a roster, they're probably the most talented in the league year in and year out."

— An opposing Sun Belt assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (9) — Returning Starters in Bold

WR	**2**	**Corey Sutton (Jr.)**	11	Jalen Virgil (Jr.)
WR	**5**	**Thomas Hennigan (Jr.)**		Christian Wells (Fr.)
WR	14	Malik Williams (Jr.)		Dashaun Davis (Fr.)
LT	**75**	**Victor Johnson (Sr.)**	56	Nate Haskins (Jr.)
LG	**58**	**Ryan Neuzil (Jr.)**	70	Cooper Hodges (Fr.)
C	**60**	**Noah Hannon (Jr.)**	63	Ivan Reyes (Jr.)
RG	**51**	**Baer Hunter (Jr.)**	70	Cooper Hodges (Fr.)
RT	73	Cole Garrison (Jr.)	79	Luke Burnette (Fr.)
TE	**87**	**Collin Reed (Sr.)**	88	Henry Pearson (So.)
QB	**12**	**Zac Thomas (Jr.)**	7	Jacob Huesman (Jr.)
RB	**3**	**Darrynton Evans (Jr.)**	26	Marcus Williams Jr. (Jr.)

DEFENSE (6)

DE	48	Demetrius Taylor (Jr.)	97	Caleb Spurlin (Jr.)
DT	98	E.J. Scott (Sr.)	99	Jordon Earle (Fr.)
DE	**57**	**Elijah Diarrassouba (Jr.)**	90	Chris Willis (Jr.)
OLB	**24**	**Akeem Davis-Gaither (Sr.)**		Brendan Harrington (Fr.)
LB	45	Trey Cobb (So.)	52	D'Marco Jackson (So.)
LB	**59**	**Jordan Fehr (Sr.)**	40	Logan Doublin (So.)
OLB	**20**	**Noel Cook (Sr.)**	31	Nick Hampton (Fr.)
CB	8	Shemar Jean-Charles (Jr.)	27	A.J. Beach (Sr.)
CB	16	Shaun Jolly (So.)	12	Steven Jones (So.)
S	**7**	**Josh Thomas (Sr.)**	25	Kaleb Dawson (Fr.)
S	**6**	**Desmond Franklin (Sr.)**	21	Ryan Huff (So.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	91	Chandler Staton (Jr.)	**KR**	3	Darrynton Evans (Jr.)
P	30	Clayton Howell (So.)	**PR**	5	Thomas Hennigan (Jr.)

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Zac Thomas, 254-159-2,039-6, 21 TDs
Rushing: Darrynton Evans, 179 att., 1,187 yds., 7 TDs
Receiving: Corey Sutton, 44 rec., 773 yds., 10 TDs
Tackles: Akeem Davis-Gaither, 105
Sacks: Jordan Fehr, 5.5
Interceptions: Desmond Franklin, Josh Thomas, 4

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Eli Drinkwitz
Record at School: First Season
Career Record: First Season
Offensive Coordinator: Eli Drinkwitz
Defensive Coordinator: Ted Roof
Boone, NC • Kidd Brewer Stadium (30,000)

App State Athletics

Coastal Carolina **Chanticleers**

National Forecast: **124** • Sun Belt East Prediction: **5** • Projected Record: **3-9, 1-7 Sun Belt**

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	Eastern Michigan
Sept.	7	at Kansas
Sept.	14	Norfolk State
Sept.	21	at Massachusetts
Sept.	28	at Appalachian State
Oct.	12	Georgia State
Oct.	19	at Georgia Southern
Nov.	2	Troy
Nov.	7	Louisiana
Nov.	16	at Arkansas State
Nov.	23	at ULM
Nov.	30	Texas State

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 5-7, 2-6 SBC

Sept.	1	at South Carolina	L	15-49
Sept.	8	UAB	W	47-24
Sept.	12	at Campbell	W	58-21
Sept.	22	at Louisiana	W	30-28
Sept.	29	at Troy	L	21-45
Oct.	13	ULM	L	20-45
Oct.	20	at Massachusetts	W	24-13
Oct.	27	at Georgia State	W	37-34
Nov.	3	Appalachian State	L	7-23
Nov.	10	Arkansas State	L	16-44
Nov.	17	Georgia Southern	L	17-41
Nov.	23	at South Alabama	L	28-31

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Coleman Reich, S, High Point, NC
2. KJ Johnson, DB, Buford, GA
3. Reese White, RB, Atlanta, GA
4. Kameren Stewart, OT, Irmo, SC
5. Jarrett Guest, QB, Acworth, GA
6. Deon Fountain, WR, Valdosta, GA
7. Drew Leszczynski, QB, Brookfield, WI
8. Grayson McCall, QB, Charlotte, NC
9. Will Robertson, OT, Acworth, GA
10. Jaden Gragg, DB, Melbourne, FL

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	SBC	NATIONAL
Scoring	26.7 ppg	6	84
Rushing	198.7 ypg	4	41
Passing	180.7 ypg	9	106
Total	379.3 ypg	6	87
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**SBC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	33.2 ppg	7	100
Rushing	244.4 ypg	9	121
Passing	206.4 ypg	4	41
Total	450.8 ypg	9	110
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**SBC**	**NATIONAL**
-6	-0.50	8	108

STAT CORNER

7.6

Coastal didn't get much help from its defense. The Chants allowed 6.8 yards per play in wins — and 7.6 in losses.

OFFENSE The starting quarterback, whoever he is, will be young and relatively inexperienced. Sophomores Fred Payton of Suwanee, Ga., and Bryce Carpenter of Sarasota, Fla., the 2017 Florida Mr. Football, started games as freshmen and completed at least 65 percent of their passes with at least a 2.5-to-1 touchdown-to-interception ratio. Both can incorporate the run-pass option in coach Jamey Chadwell's spread option offense, but neither established himself as the starter in the spring. Both may play significantly.

Leading rusher junior Torrance "CJ" Marable returns after gaining 719 yards and scoring six touchdowns while averaging 6.1 yards per carry. He's both durable and dangerous. Marable led the FCS Big South Conference in rushing as a freshman at Presbyterian.

Speedy and elusive senior Ky'Jon Tyler has 54 career catches for 780 yards and five TDs and averaged 15.3 yards per catch last season. Sophomore Jeremiah Miller was third on the team with 21 receptions.

Coastal Carolina returns three starters on the offensive line in juniors Steven Bedosky and Trey Carter and sophomore Sean Fitzgerald, but the Chanticleers lost 27-game starter Ethan Howard (medical hardship) and two-year starter Brock Hoffman (transfer to Virginia Tech), who were both eligible to return.

DEFENSE Coastal's 4-3 defense allowed 33.2 points and 450.8 yards per game in coordinator Marvin Sanders' first season. The team is changing to a 3-4 with 4-3 flexibility and has hired a couple of new defensive coaches in an attempt to improve those numbers. But defensive end Jeffrey Gunter, CCU's only first-team All-Sun Belt player last year, transferred to NC State. The Chants also expected to lose senior safety Jave Brown to a transfer.

CCU should be strong up the middle, with returning defensive tackle Sterling Johnson, a 300-pounder who began his career at Clemson, and talented junior inside linebackers Silas Kelly and Teddy Gallagher.

Junior defensive end Tarron Jackson was named third-team all-conference after recording 11 tackles for a loss last season and showed explosiveness and tenacity throughout spring practices.

Coastal returns just one starter in the defensive backfield in senior cornerback Mallory Claybourne and has a sophomore and junior college transfer slated to start at safety.

SPECIALISTS Coastal is experienced and solid on special teams. Placekicker Massimo Biscardi returns after being named third-team all-conference as a freshman last season, when he made 13-of-16 field goals — though he missed three extra points. Junior Charles Ouverson showed a big leg, averaging 43.2 yards per punt in 2018. Tyler led the team in both punt and kickoff returns last year, averaging nearly 22 yards per kick return and 7.5 per punt return. He's backed up by Marable.

FINAL ANALYSIS Chadwell steps in after the surprising retirement of Joe Moglia in January. But it should be a smooth transition — Chadwell was the head coach at Charleston Southern from 2013-16 and was the interim coach at CCU in 2017 when Moglia missed the season due to a medical issue.

The 2019 season figures to be a struggle. The Chants are unproven at quarterback and must address a porous rush defense that was repeatedly gashed last season.

CJ Marable

"They need to address their defense, and that starts in recruiting. They just don't have the talent they need to be competitive in the league."

— An opposing Sun Belt assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (6)					Returning Starters in Bold
WR	19	Ky'Jon Tyler (Sr.)			Samuel Denmark (Jr.)
WR	**84**	**Jeremiah Miller (So.)**	6		Jaivon Heiligh (So.)
LT	77	Seth Harrell (So.)	66		Corbin Small (Fr.)
LG	**62**	**Sean Fitzgerald (So.)**	74		Jack Franklin (Jr.)
C	**63**	**Trey Carter (Jr.)**	51		Sam Thompson (Jr.)
RG	78	Will Webster (So.)	**79**		**Steven Bedosky (Jr.)**
RT	72	Antwine Loper (So.)	79		Steven Bedosky (Jr.)
TE	**11**	**Shadell Bell (Sr.)**	46		Isaiah Likely (Fr.)
QB	13	Fred Payton (So.)	12		Bryce Carpenter (So.)
RB	**17**	**CJ Marable (Jr.)**	31		Baden Pinson (So.)
RB	28	Jacqez Hairston (Jr.)	25		Anthony McAfee (So.)
DEFENSE (6)					
DE	9	**Tarron Jackson (Jr.)**	92		Wallace Cowins (Jr.)
NT	**6**	**Sterling Johnson (Sr.)**	**99**		**Jonathan Clayton (Jr.)**
DT	52	C.J. Brewer (Jr.)	50		Jalin Walker (Jr.)
OLB	41	Myles Olufemi (Jr.)	33		Cincir Evans (Fr.)
ILB	**29**	**Silas Kelly (Jr.)**	44		E.J. Porter (So.)
ILB	34	Teddy Gallagher (Jr.)	25		Laqavious Paul (Sr.)
OLB	45	Chris Evans (So.)	**40**		**Michael Makins (So.)**
CB	23	Derick Bush (So.)	16		Jordan Morris (So.)
CB	**7**	**Mallory Claybourne (Sr.)**	13		Chandler Kryst (Sr.)
S	43	Enock Makonzo (Jr.)	10		Alex Spillumm (So.)
S	11	Kameron Burton (So.)	26		Brayden Matts (So.)
SPECIAL TEAMS					
K	29	Massimo Biscardi (So.)	**KR**	19	Ky'Jon Tyler (Sr.)
P	98	Charles Ouverson (Jr.)	**PR**	19	Ky'Jon Tyler (Sr.)

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Fred Payton, 75-49-677-2, 6 TDs
Rushing: CJ Marable, 118 att., 719 yds., 6 TDs
Receiving: Ky'Jon Tyler, 26 rec., 397 yds., 2 TDs
Tackles: Silas Kelly, 60
Sacks: Tarron Jackson, Sterling Johnson, 3.0
Interceptions: Derambez Drinkard, Chandler Kryst, 2

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Jamey Chadwell
Record at School: 3-9 (1 year, interim in 2017)
Career Record: 63-44 (9 years)
Offensive Coordinators: Willy Korn, Newland Isaac
Defensive Coordinator: Marvin Sanders
Conway, SC • Brooks Stadium (20,000)

Danny Karnik

Georgia Southern **Eagles**

National Forecast: **76** • Sun Belt East Prediction: **3** • Projected Record: **7-5, 5-3 Sun Belt**

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	at LSU
Sept.	7	Maine
Sept.	14	at Minnesota
Sept.	28	Louisiana
Oct.	3	at South Alabama
Oct.	19	Coastal Carolina
Oct.	26	New Mexico State
Oct.	31	at Appalachian State
Nov.	9	at Troy
Nov.	16	ULM
Nov.	23	at Arkansas State
Nov.	30	Georgia State

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 10-3, 6-2 SBC

Sept.	1	South Carolina State	W	37-6
Sept.	8	Massachusetts	W	34-13
Sept.	15	at Clemson	L	7-38
Sept.	29	Arkansas State	W	28-21
Oct.	6	South Alabama	W	48-13
Oct.	11	at Texas State	W	15-13
Oct.	20	at New Mexico State	W	48-31
Oct.	25	Appalachian State	W	34-14
Nov.	3	at ULM	L	25-44
Nov.	10	Troy	L	21-35
Nov.	17	at Coastal Carolina	W	41-17
Nov.	24	at Georgia State	W	35-14
Dec.	15	vs. Eastern Mich. #	W	23-21

#Camellia Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. David Spaulding, CB, Hinesville, GA
2. Beau Johnson, TE, Fort Lauderdale, FL
3. Jaden Jenkins, QB, Bartow, GA
4. Javonte McGriff, OG, Thomasville, GA
5. Java'n Singletary, S, Bonaire, GA
6. Treun Pace, S, Pelham, GA
7. AJ Watkins, DT, Fairburn, GA
8. Emil Smith, WR, Attalla, AL
9. Darius Lewis, ATH, Jacksonville, FL
10. Jordan Wiggins, OT, Tallahassee, FL

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	SBC	NATIONAL
Scoring	30.5 ppg	4	52
Rushing	266.2 ypg	1	7
Passing	79.0 ypg	10	129
Total	345.2 ypg	9	113
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**SBC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	21.5 ppg	2	25
Rushing	140.5 ypg	3	37
Passing	216.5 ypg	5	54
Total	357.1 ypg	3	41
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**SBC**	**NATIONAL**
+22	+1.69	1	1

STAT CORNER

33.0

No team milked the clock like the Eagles, not even Army. GSU averaged one snap every 33.0 seconds, the slowest tempo in FBS.

OFFENSE There's a reason why Georgia Southern keeps returning to its traditional triple-option identity every time the school wanders away: It works. After a swift fall to the bottom of the Sun Belt, the Eagles bounced back to 10 wins in Chad Lunsford's first full season while rushing for a league-best 266.2 yards per game in coordinator Bob DeBesse's offense. "We got more to the true triple in that you have to give, keep or pitch from your QB, and he just has a lot of different ways of window dressing that to make it hard on the defense," Lunsford says.

The system will look similar in 2019, particularly with junior quarterback Shai Werts returning for his third year as a starter. Werts can throw it effectively — he completed almost 60 percent of his passes last season — but he is a running threat first (5.0 ypc). He will need to be even more elusive with questions at center (senior Jakob Cooper moved over from guard during the spring), tight end (all-conference performer Ellis Richardson is gone) and running back. With the graduation of Wesley Fields, who touched the ball more than half of the 503 snaps he played last season, Lunsford is counting on Wesley Kennedy III (64 carries), Logan Wright (47), and Matt LaRoche (26) to show both durability and explosiveness.

DEFENSE The Eagles tried to keep things simple as they transitioned from a four-man front to a 3-4, but they plan to introduce more aggressiveness into the scheme with a group that's older up front and should be strong at cornerback with returning starters in Kindle Vildor and Monquavion Brinson.

Georgia Southern successfully limited big plays last year — the Eagles gave up just 18 gains of 30 yards or more — and will continue to focus on making sure opposing offenses earn everything they get. "We're very conscious of trying to keep everything in front of us and understand that a bend-but-don't break mentality can be good," Lunsford says.

The front seven allowed just 3.9 yards per carry last year, starting with All-Sun Belt defensive end Raymond Johnson III (8.0 TFLs, 4.5 sacks) and senior tackle Ty Phillips, who enters his third year as a starter. The Eagles return both of their outside backers. Chris Harris Jr., who started the final seven games last year at one of the inside spots, might be supplanted by Furman transfer Reynard Ellis.

Whether this defense can take another step after allowing just 21.5 points per game could depend on the safety positions, where a pair of starters are gone and Kenderick Duncan Jr. and Darrell Baker will move into bigger roles.

SPECIALISTS Senior Tyler Bass could be a Lou Groza Award candidate after making all 45 PATs and 19-of-21 field goals last season, including 10 makes of 40 yards or longer. Punter Magill Bauerle is expected to keep his job after 18 of his 56 punts last season were downed inside the 20-yard line.

FINAL ANALYSIS Lunsford knows that going from 2–10 to 10–3 in one year will raise expectations, particularly with only 14 seniors departing and lots of key starters coming back. But with a tougher schedule, he's looking for improvement in some overshadowed situational areas such as fourth down conversions (6-of-12 last season) and allowing fewer yards on first down. If that happens, this could be a team that contends for the Sun Belt title.

Shai Werts

"They took a huge step forward last season and look like those old Paul Johnson teams; mean and hard. Plus, they are athletic."

— An opposing Sun Belt assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (5)			Returning Starters in Bold	
WR	9	Obe Fortune (Sr.)	**83**	**Colby Ransom (Sr.)**
WR	23	Mark Michaud (Sr.)	81	Darion Anderson (Jr.)
SLOT	33	Malik Murray (Jr.)	26	Najee Thompson (So.)
LT	61	Drew Wilson (Jr.)	70	Jarrod Leeds (So.)
LG	66	Jake Edwards (Sr.)	**51**	**Aaron Dowdell (Jr.)**
C	**64**	**Jakob Cooper (Sr.)**	71	Peyton Backer (So.)
RG	74	Lawrence Edwards (Jr.)	57	Javonte McGriff (Fr.)
RT	**56**	**Brian Miller (So.)**	50	Caleb Kelly (So.)
TE	48	Cam Brown (Jr.)	44	Logan Powell (Fr.)
QB	**4**	**Shai Werts (Jr.)**	17	Justin Tomlin (Fr.)
RB	39	Logan Wright (So.)	12	Wesley Kennedy III (Jr.)
DEFENSE (7)				
DE	**92**	**Raymond Johnson III (Jr.)**	97	Justin Ellis (So.)
NT	**96**	**Ty Phillips (Sr.)**	94	C.J. Wright (So.)
DE	49	Traver Vliem (Jr.)	52	Quan Griffin (Jr.)
OLB	**5**	**Jay Bowdry (Sr.)**	37	Lane Ecton (Sr.)
ILB	50	Reynard Ellis (So.)	**32**	**Chris Harris Jr. (Jr.)**
ILB	45	Rashad Byrd (Jr.)	34	Jon Ferguson (Fr.)
OLB	**47**	**Randy Wade Jr. (Jr.)**	42	Alvin Ward (Jr.)
CB	**20**	**Kindle Vildor (Sr.)**	15	Jessie Liptrot (Sr.)
CB	**4**	**Monquavion Brinson (Sr.)**	18	Justin Birdsong (So.)
S	27	Kenderick Duncan Jr. (So.)	24	Donald Rutledge Jr. (Sr.)
S	31	Darrell Baker (Jr.)	22	Treun Pace (Fr.)
SPECIAL TEAMS				
K	16	Tyler Bass (Sr.)	**KR** 12	Wesley Kennedy (Jr.)
P	84	Magill Bauerle (Jr.)	**PR** 12	Wesley Kennedy (Jr.)

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Shai Werts, 116-69-987-0, 10 TDs
Rushing: Shai Werts, 182 att., 908 yds., 15 TDs
Receiving: Wesley Kennedy III, 15 rec., 182 yds., 0 TDs
Tackles: Monquavion Brinson, 67
Sacks: Raymond Johnson III, 4.5
Interceptions: Kindle Vildor, 4

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Chad Lunsford
Record at School: 12-7 (1+ year)
Career Record: 12-7 (1+ year)
Offensive Coordinator: Bob DeBesse
Defensive Coordinator: Scot Sloan
Statesboro, GA • Paulson Stadium (25,000)

Georgia Southern Athletics

Georgia State **Panthers**

National Forecast: **122** • Sun Belt East Prediction: **4** • Projected Record: **3-9, 2-6 Sun Belt**

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	at Tennessee
Sept.	7	Furman
Sept.	14	at Western Michigan
Sept.	21	at Texas State
Oct.	5	Arkansas State
Oct.	12	at Coastal Carolina
Oct.	19	Army
Oct.	26	Troy
Nov.	9	at ULM
Nov.	16	Appalachian State
Nov.	23	South Alabama
Nov.	30	at Georgia Southern

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 2-10, 1-7 SBC

Aug.	30	Kennesaw State	W	24-20
Sept.	8	at NC State	L	7-41
Sept.	14	at Memphis	L	22-59
Sept.	22	Western Michigan	L	15-34
Sept.	29	ULM	W	46-14
Oct.	4	at Troy	L	20-37
Oct.	18	at Arkansas State	L	35-51
Oct.	27	Coastal Carolina	L	34-37
Nov.	3	Texas State	L	31-40
Nov.	10	at Louisiana	L	22-36
Nov.	17	at Appalachian State	L	17-45
Nov.	24	Georgia Southern	L	14-35

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Miles Dickens, DE, Deerfield Beach, FL
2. Cornelius Brown, QB, Calera, AL
3. Jamari Thrash, WR, LaGrange, GA
4. Luis Cristobal, OG, Miami, FL
5. Antavious Lane, S, West Palm Beach, FL
6. Trey Bonner, OT, Gray, GA
7. Ronald Folkes, PT, West Palm Beach, FL
8. Jordan Veneziale, LB, Dallas, GA
9. Avery Reece, TE, Honea Path, SC
10. Jaquez Pennimon, S, Macon, GA

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	SBC	NATIONAL
Scoring	23.9 ppg	9	104
Rushing	171.4 ypg	7	62
Passing	206.8 ypg	4	92
Total	378.2 ypg	7	90
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**SBC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	37.4 ppg	9	122
Rushing	251.0 ypg	10	124
Passing	238.5 ypg	8	80
Total	489.5 ypg	10	125
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**SBC**	**NATIONAL**
-8	-0.67	9	115

STAT CORNER

3.6

The dam busted often: GSU allowed 3.6 gains per game of 30-plus yards (1.8 via rush, 1.8 via pass), second most in FBS.

OFFENSE For the first time since Shawn Elliott took over, the Panthers enter a season with experienced depth on the offensive line, a returning starter at quarterback in Dan Ellington and most of their skill players back from the previous year. That combination should allow Georgia State to take yet another step offensively after averaging a decent 5.6 yards per play (76th nationally).

While Georgia State will miss receiver Penny Hart, one of the Sun Belt's most explosive players, the Panthers have five experienced running backs they plan on utilizing in creative ways and a solid young set of receivers led by Cornelius McCoy and Sam Pinckney, who flashed potential as a freshman before a season-ending injury.

Despite losing coordinator Travis Trickett to West Virginia, things won't change much for Ellington in the system Brad Glenn brings from Western Carolina and Appalachian State, where he worked with Elliott previously. "I look for a tremendous year out of him," Elliott says of Ellington, who threw for 2,119 yards and was also the team's leading rusher. "He's very cool and calm, and he's one of the more well-respected men we have on our team."

Ellington will rely on the left side of his line, where tackle Hunter Atkinson and guard Shamarious Gilmore both received all-conference recognition.

DEFENSE After fielding the league's worst passing defense last season in yards per attempt (9.5), the Panthers are counting on age and a new approach to bring better results. Injuries to upperclassmen such as corner Cedric Stone forced the Panthers to play up to four freshmen at times in the secondary, and that experience should pay dividends this year for players like corner Quavian White and safeties Jaylon Jones and Jacorey Crawford.

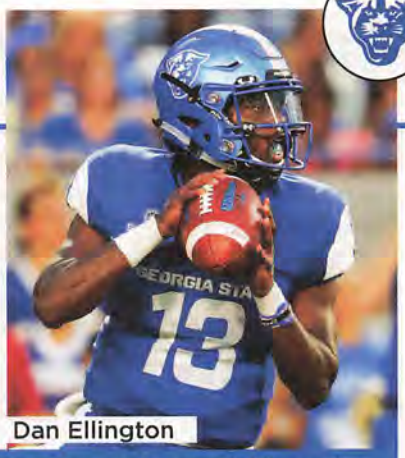
"They've had a full year to build their strength and football IQ," Elliott says. "It's night and day from where it was."

But Elliott also acknowledges that the Panthers need to be less predictable and more aggressive up front. One potential difference-maker is new defensive line coach Brad Lawing, who was a pass-rush specialist in previous stops under Jimbo Fisher, Nick Saban and Steve Spurrier. He'll work with a group that only loses one contributor up front and returns a likely All-SBC defensive end in senior Terry Thomas.

SPECIALISTS The Panthers will again use Brandon Wright as both a punter and placekicker. While his field goal accuracy needs to improve (7-of-11 last year), he has a big leg and connected on a 52-yarder while averaging a Sun Belt-record 48.2 yards per punt. Without Hart, who keyed the return game, Georgia State might look to McCoy.

FINAL ANALYSIS Georgia State expected a struggle last season after losing the bulk of its upperclassmen. Now in his third year, Elliott believes he has built a talent base the right way, largely eschewing quick-fix transfers and banking on development from players his staff identified and developed from the ground up. "I still thought our program last season was in much better shape than it had been even though the success wasn't there," Elliott says.

The Panthers may still be a year away from a big breakthrough, but with so many key players getting valuable experience last year, it's reasonable to expect evidence of growth in 2019.



Dan Ellington

"They've got such a good thing going with that stadium and the city of Atlanta. Coaches in the industry think they should be better."

— An opposing Sun Belt assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (4)					Returning Starters in Bold
WR	83	**Cornelius McCoy (So.)**	82	Diondre Champaigne (Sr.)
WR	14	Devin Gentry (Sr.)	85	Christian Owens (Sr.)
WR	15	Sam Pinckney (Fr.)	7	Tamir Jones (Jr.)
LT	76	**Hunter Atkinson (Sr.)**	77	Johnathan Bass (Fr.)
LG	75	**Shamarious Gilmore (Jr.)**	71	Jaelin Whitt (Fr.)
C	62	Malik Sumter (So.)	70	Chris Sibilia (So.)
RG	64	Pat Bartlett (So.)	74	Despelado Alexandre (Fr.)
RT	73	Travis Glover (Fr.)	79	Connor Robbins (So.)
TE	45	Roger Carter (Jr.)	86	Bryson Duckworth (Jr.)
QB	13	**Dan Ellington (Sr.)**	16	Swift Lyle (Fr.)
RB	5	Tra Barnett (Sr.)	28	Seth Paige (So.)
DEFENSE (7)				
DE	55	**Terry Thomas (Sr.)**	30	Javonte Lain (Jr.)
NG	52	**Dontae Wilson (Jr.)**	97	Akeem Smith (So.)
DE	90	Hardrick Willis (Jr.)	50	T.J. Arnold (Jr.)
OLB	37	**Victor Heyward (Jr.)**	47	Jhi'Shawn Taylor (So.)
ILB	2	**Ed Curney (Sr.)**	42	Blake Carroll (So.)
ILB	6	Trajan Stephens-McQueen (Jr.)	53	Jalen Wade (Sr.)
OLB	7	Jordan Strachan (So.)	1	Jontrey Hunter (So.)
CB	20	**Quavian White (So.)**	4	Khai Anderson (Sr.)
CB	9	Cedric Stone (Jr.)	28	Ben Hood (Sr.)
S	27	**Jaylon Jones (So.)**	10	Jacorey Crawford (So.)
S	21	**Remy Lazarus (Sr.)**	3	Chris Bacon (So.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	93	Brandon Wright (Sr.)	**KR** 83	Cornelius McCoy (So.)
P	93	Brandon Wright (Sr.)	**PR** 83	Cornelius McCoy (So.)

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Dan Ellington, 292-174-2,119-5, 12 TDs
Rushing: Dan Ellington, 159 att., 625 yds., 5 TDs
Receiving: Cornelius McCoy, 35 rec., 495 yds., 1 TD
Tackles: Ed Curney, 81
Sacks: Javonte Lain, 2.0
Interceptions: 5 players tied with 1

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Shawn Elliott
Record at School: 9-15 (2 years)
Career Record: 10-20 (2+ years)
Offensive Coordinator: Brad Glenn
Defensive Coordinator: Nate Fuqua
Atlanta, GA • Georgia State Stadium (25,000)

Jason Getz

Troy **Trojans**

National Forecast: **74** • Sun Belt East Prediction: **2** • Projected Record: **8-4, 6-2 Sun Belt**

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	Campbell
Sept.	14	Southern Miss
Sept.	21	at Akron
Sept.	28	Arkansas State
Oct.	5	at Missouri
Oct.	16	South Alabama
Oct.	26	at Georgia State
Nov.	2	at Coastal Carolina
Nov.	9	Georgia Southern
Nov.	16	at Texas State
Nov.	23	at Louisiana
Nov.	30	Appalachian State

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 10-3, 7-1 SBC

Sept.	1	Boise State	L	20-56
Sept.	8	Florida A&M	W	59-7
Sept.	15	at Nebraska	W	24-19
Sept.	22	at ULM	W	35-27
Sept.	29	Coastal Carolina	W	45-21
Oct.	4	Georgia State	W	37-20
Oct.	13	at Liberty	L	16-22
Oct.	23	at South Alabama	W	38-17
Nov.	3	Louisiana	W	26-16
Nov.	10	at Georgia Southern	W	35-21
Nov.	17	Texas State	W	12-7
Nov.	24	at Appalachian State	L	10-21
Dec.	22	vs. Buffalo #	W	42-32

#Dollar General Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Reddy Steward, CB, Decatur, AL
2. Khalil McClain, WR, Fairburn, GA*
3. Ahdarrious Gee, LB, Cordele, GA
4. Dell Pettus, CB, Harvest, AL
5. Ricky Samuel, DT, Brewton, AL
6. Jaden Warren, WR, Oneonta, AL
7. Jaylen Childs, OT, Anniston, AL
8. DeVon Reaves, DE, Conyers, GA
9. Christian Murphy, CB, Pensacola, FL
10. Reggie Todd, WR, Mobile, AL*

*junior college transfer

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	SBC	NATIONAL
Scoring	30.7 ppg	3	51
Rushing	174.1 ypg	6	58
Passing	215.3 ypg	3	81
Total	389.4 ypg	5	80
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**SBC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	22.0 ppg	3	28
Rushing	128.7 ypg	2	24
Passing	219.2 ypg	7	57
Total	347.9 ypg	2	31
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**SBC**	**NATIONAL**
+10	+0.77	2	11

STAT CORNER

8

Troy lost eight games in Neal Brown's first season and then lost a total of eight games in his final three years.

OFFENSE For the second year in a row, the quarterback situation is a dead heat between senior Kaleb Barker, who started the first six games in 2018 before suffering a torn ACL, and junior Sawyer Smith, who took nearly every snap over the second half of the season.

Barker was the more efficient of the two, finishing with 13 total touchdowns to just two INTs before his injury; the Trojans averaged more than 10 points more per game in his starts than in Smith's. At 6'3", 219 pounds, however, Smith arguably has the higher upside, and he redeemed a rough finish to the regular season with an MVP turn in the bowl game. New head coach Chip Lindsey declared the job wide open in the spring.

The ground game is more settled. Senior B.J. Smith, a first-team All-Sun Belt pick in his first year as the feature back, should earn the lion's share of carries again behind four returning starters on the offensive line. The receiving corps, on the other hand, is almost a blank slate: Last year's top three wideouts are all gone, leaving a void that may be filled by newcomers.

DEFENSE Troy consistently fielded one of the Sun Belt's best defenses under departed coach Neal Brown, holding SBC opponents under 20 points per game each of the past three seasons. This year, for a unit that lost its leading tackler (Tron Folsom), best pass rusher (Hunter Reese), two All-SBC-level cornerbacks (Blace Brown and Marcus Jones) and first-team all-conference picks on both the front line (nose tackle Trevon Sanders) and the back (safety Cedarius Rookard), extending that streak might be setting the bar just a little high. But the drop-off likely will not be as steep as the exodus suggests.

For one, the scheme will remain largely intact with the promotion of a Brown holdover, Brandon Hall, to defensive coordinator. And attrition notwithstanding, there are still 11 players back on defense who started multiple games in 2018, led by safeties Melvin Tyus and Tyler Murray. There's also junior linebacker Zo Bridges, a part-time starter in 2017 who missed all of last year with an ankle injury. Between a healthy Bridges at Bandit and senior ends Jarvis Hayes and Antione Barker, the league's most productive pass rush has the potential to retain its title.

SPECIALISTS Marcus Jones' surprise transfer in the spring to Houston was a double whammy, forcing the Trojans to replace both a proven cornerback and one of the nation's most electric return men. Place-kicking and punting duties will fall again to junior Tyler Sumpter, who went 8-of-11 last year on field goal attempts from 40 yards and beyond and averaged 45.1 yards on 55 punts.

FINAL ANALYSIS The last three years under Brown, who left for West Virginia, were the best in school history, yielding 31 wins, a conference championship in 2017 and landmark upsets over LSU and Nebraska. Troy's winning percentage in that span (.795) matched UCF's as the best of any non-Power 5 program.

That said, it's hard to imagine a better long-term fit than Lindsey, an Alabama native with deep recruiting ties in the state as both a high school coach and an assistant at Auburn. It's also hard to imagine him inheriting a more solid foundation. Transition year or not, if the SBC East isn't on the line again in the regular-season finale against Appalachian State, it will be disappointing.

B.J. Smith

"Neal (Brown) left them in good shape. Their personnel is good, and they know how to recruit their area better than most programs in the league."

— An opposing Sun Belt assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (7)			Returning Starters in Bold	
WR	13	Tray Eafford (Jr.)	83	Luke Whittemore (So.)
WR	8	Khalil McClain (Jr.)	23	Bret Clark (So.)
WR	2	Reggie Todd (Jr.)	88	Demontrez Brown (Fr.)
LT	**69**	**J.L. Gaston (Sr.)**	64	Gerald Bell Jr. (Jr.)
LG	**78**	**Kirk Kelley (Sr.)**	77	Travius Harris (So.)
C	65	Dylan Bradshaw (Jr.)	67	Grant Betts (Fr.)
RG	**54**	**Tristan Crowder (Sr.)**	71	Hamilton Hawthorne II (Fr.)
RT	**79**	**Austin Stidham (So.)**	55	Jake Andrews (Fr.)
TE	17	Sam Letton (Jr.)	**10**	**Richard Hallman (Sr.)**
QB	7	Kaleb Barker (Sr.)	**3**	**Sawyer Smith (Jr.)**
RB	**26**	**B.J. Smith (Sr.)**	5	Jabir Daughtry-Frye (Jr.)
DEFENSE (6)				
DE	**20**	**Jarvis Hayes (Sr.)**	40	Antione Barker (Sr.)
DT	**48**	**Marcus Webb (Sr.)**	94	Travis Sailo (Sr.)
NT	95	Will Choloh Jr. (So.)	97	A.J. Pierce (Fr.)
OLB	50	Zo Bridges (Jr.)	21	Kevin Nixon (Jr.)
LB	**38**	**Carlton Martial (So.)**	44	KJ Robertson (So.)
LB	25	Justin Whisenhunt (Jr.)	31	A.J. Smiley (Sr.)
CB	**14**	**Terence Dunlap (Jr.)**	27	Jawon McDowell (Sr.)
CB	10	Will Sunderland (Sr.)		Reddy Steward (Fr.)
NB	**35**	**Tyler Murray (Jr.)**	32	Shon Spralling (So.)
SS	**12**	**Melvin Tyus (Sr.)**	39	Kyler Knudsen (Sr.)
FS	22	Kyle Nixon (Jr.)	39	Kyler Knudsen (Sr.)
SPECIAL TEAMS				
K	98	Tyler Sumpter (Jr.)	**KR** 5	Jabir Daughtry-Frye (Jr.)
P	98	Tyler Sumpter (Jr.)	**PR** 14	Terence Dunlap (Jr.)

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Sawyer Smith, 229-144-1,669-6, 14 TDs
Rushing: B.J. Smith, 219 att., 1,186 yds., 13 TDs
Receiving: Tray Eafford, 24 rec., 292 yds., 3 TDs
Tackles: Carlton Martial, 76
Sacks: Antione Barker, Jarvis Hayes, 4.5
Interceptions: Tyler Murray, 3

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Chip Lindsey
Record at School: First Season
Career Record: First Season
Offensive Coordinator: Ryan Pugh
Defensive Coordinator: Brandon Hall
Troy, AL • Veterans Memorial Stadium (30,000)

Troy Athletics

Arkansas State **Red Wolves**

National Forecast: **79** • Sun Belt West Prediction: **1** • Projected Record: **8-5, 6-2 Sun Belt**

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	SMU
Sept.	7	at UNLV
Sept.	14	at Georgia
Sept.	21	Southern Illinois
Sept.	28	at Troy
Oct.	5	at Georgia State
Oct.	17	UL Lafayette
Oct.	26	Texas State
Nov.	2	at UL Monroe
Nov.	16	Coastal Carolina
Nov.	23	Georgia Southern
Nov.	29	at South Alabama

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 8-5, 5-3 SBC

Sept.	1	SE Missouri State	W	48-21
Sept.	8	at Alabama	L	7-57
Sept.	15	at Tulsa	W	29-20
Sept.	22	UNLV	W	27-20
Sept.	29	at Georgia Southern	L	21-28
Oct.	9	Appalachian State	L	9-35
Oct.	18	Georgia State	W	51-35
Oct.	27	at Louisiana	L	43-47
Nov.	3	South Alabama	W	38-14
Nov.	10	at Coastal Carolina	W	44-16
Nov.	17	UL Monroe	W	31-17
Nov.	24	at Texas State	W	33-7
Dec.	29	vs. Nevada # (ot)	L	13-16

#Arizona Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Jeff Foreman, WR, Oklahoma City, OK
2. Isaiah Azubuike, RB, St. Louis, MO
3. Vershaud Richardson, DE, Paris, TX
4. Coltin Clack, QB, Texarkana, TX
5. Kailon Davis, DE, New Orleans*
6. Samy Johnson, RB, Little Rock, AR
7. Ivory Scott, OG, Kenner, LA*
8. Eugene Minter, WR, Birmingham, AL*
9. Jarius Reimonenq, S, Hattiesburg, MS
10. Aaron Donkor, DE, Aachen, Germany*

*junior college transfer

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	SBC	NATIONAL
Scoring	30.3 ppg	5	55
Rushing	184.8 ypg	5	49
Passing	281.5 ypg	1	21
Total	466.2 ypg	1	17
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**SBC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	25.6 ppg	4	54
Rushing	191.8 ypg	6	91
Passing	177.8 ypg	2	11
Total	369.5 ypg	4	45
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**SBC**	**NATIONAL**
+4	+0.31	4	41

STAT CORNER

4.3

You've got to finish: ASU was 92nd in FBS in points scored per trip inside the 40 (4.3) and 99th in points per trip allowed (5.0).

OFFENSE Coach Blake Anderson revamped his offensive staff in January, firing three assistants while relinquishing play-calling duties, but the Red Wolves won't make drastic system changes. New offensive coordinator Keith Heckendorf worked closely with Anderson when they were on the same staff at North Carolina.

Logan Bonner takes over at quarterback after two years backing up Sun Belt Player of the Year Justice Hansen. Bonner has little experience, having thrown only 53 passes in two seasons, and his backups have virtually none.

Dynamic running back Marcel Murray earned Sun Belt Freshman of the Year honors last season, finishing with 860 yards and eight touchdowns rushing, and junior college transfer Ryan Graham should provide versatility.

The Red Wolves remain deep and talented at wide receiver. Kirk Merritt, a matchup problem with his size and speed, caught 83 passes for 1,005 yards and seven touchdowns last season. Former Oklahoma receiver Dahu Green has returned from the ankle injury that ended his 2018 season in the first game, and Omar Bayless caught 39 passes last season.

Three starters return on the line, but tackle Nour-Eddine Seidnaly is recovering from knee surgery, and the Red Wolves have to replace two-time All-SBC tackle Lanard Bonner.

DEFENSE Anderson had to rebuild his defensive staff after two assistants were hired away by Houston and another departed for Duke. The scheme figures to look similar under new coordinator David Duggan, terminology being among the primary changes.

The Red Wolves had one of the league's best defenses statistically in 2018 but were burned by big plays in losses to Georgia Southern and Louisiana.

The defensive line should be a strength, even with the departure of Sun Belt Defensive Player of the Year Ronheen Bingham. End William Bradley-King appears poised to become ASU's marquee pass rusher after producing six sacks last season. Kevin Thurmon and Forrest Merrill, who combined for 7.5 sacks and 19.5 tackles for a loss, are disruptive on the interior.

Experience could alleviate some of last year's issues at linebacker. Oft-injured Tajhea Chambers turned in a full season in 2018, making 79 tackles, and Derrick Bean showed promise as a true freshman.

The secondary features one of the Sun Belt's best cornerbacks in Jerry Jacobs, who intercepted four passes, and nickel safety Darreon Jackson, the Red Wolves' top tackler last season with 90.

SPECIALISTS Thanks largely to punter Cody Grace, the Red Wolves set an NCAA record in 2018 as opponents had minus-15 punt return yards on only eight returns. Grace has placed 49 punts inside the 20 and has just one touchback in 113 career attempts. Placekicker Blake Grupe was 11-of-13 on field goal attempts of 35 yards or less but just 3-of-8 from longer distances.

FINAL ANALYSIS Last year's 8–5 finish was a disappointment for a team with higher aspirations, although Arkansas State reached a bowl game for the fifth time in as many seasons under Anderson. The Red Wolves have question marks after losing Hansen and Bingham, among others, but they still have talent at several positions, enough to be in the hunt for the Sun Belt West title.

Kirk Merritt

"Their staff has done a great job evaluating offensive skill guys, and it's a reason they're a consistent program. I always consider them a contender."

— An opposing Sun Belt assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (6)				Returning Starters in Bold
WR	7	**Omar Bayless (Sr.)**	8	Bubba Ogbebor (Jr.)
WR	13	**Kirk Merritt (Sr.)**	82	Brandon Bowling (Jr.)
WR	4	Dahu Green (Sr.)	9	Jonathan Adams Jr. (Jr.)
LT	73	Ernesto Ramirez (So.)	75	Christian Hoz (Fr.)
LG	**74**	**Andre Harris Jr. (So.)**	71	Klint Harvey (Sr.)
C	**64**	**Jacob Still (Jr.)**	78	Justin Dutton (So.)
RG	70	Ivory Scott (Jr.)	77	Jacob Atnip (Jr.)
RT	**72**	**Nour-Eddine Seidnaly (Sr.)**	55	Troy Elliott (Jr.)
TE	**81**	**Javonis Isaac (Jr.)**	87	Reed Tyler (So.)
QB	12	Logan Bonner (Jr.)	10	Carson Coats (Sr.)
RB	34	Marcel Murray (So.)	18	Ryan Graham (Jr.)
DEFENSE (7)				
DE	50	William Bradley-King (Jr.)		Kailon Davis (Jr.)
NT	**92**	**Forrest Merrill (Jr.)**	99	Tony Adams (Sr.)
DT	**15**	**Kevin Thurmon (Sr.)**	97	Terry Hampton (So.)
DE	98	Jeffmario Brown (Jr.)	91	Aaron Donkor (Jr.)
LB	26	Trent Ellis-Brewer (Sr.)	**30**	**Derrick Bean (So.)**
LB	**32**	**Tajhea Chambers (Jr.)**	22	Caleb Bonner (Jr.)
NS	**34**	**Darreon Jackson (Sr.)**	37	Logan Wescott (Sr.)
CB	**1**	**Jerry Jacobs (Jr.)**	23	Jevon Jones (Fr.)
CB	24	Jeremy Smith (Sr.)	12	Nathan Page (So.)
FS	14	Antonio Fletcher (So.)	5	Amir Howard (Jr.)
SS	**3**	**B.J. Edmonds (Sr.)**	20	Detravion Green (Fr.)
SPECIAL TEAMS				
K	25	Blake Grupe (So.)	KR 13	Kirk Merritt (Sr.)
P	41	Cody Grace (Sr.)	PR 82	Brandon Bowling (Jr.)

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Logan Bonner, 32-15-181-1, 1 TD
Rushing: Marcel Murray, 154 att., 860 yds., 8 TDs
Receiving: Kirk Merritt, 83 rec., 1,005 yds., 7 TDs
Tackles: Darreon Jackson, 90
Sacks: William Bradley-King, 6.0
Interceptions: Jerry Jacobs, 4

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Blake Anderson
Record at School: 39-25 (5 years)
Career Record: 39-25 (5 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Keith Heckendorf
Defensive Coordinator: David Duggan
Jonesboro, AR • Centennial Bank Stadium (30,406)

Arkansas State Athletics

Louisiana **Ragin' Cajuns**

National Forecast: **82** • Sun Belt West Prediction: **2** • Projected Record: **7-5, 5-3 Sun Belt**

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	vs. Mississippi State #
Sept.	7	Liberty
Sept.	14	Texas Southern
Sept.	21	at Ohio
Sept.	28	at Georgia Southern
Oct.	9	Appalachian State
Oct.	17	at Arkansas State
Nov.	2	Texas State
Nov.	7	at Coastal Carolina
Nov.	16	at South Alabama
Nov.	23	Troy
Nov.	30	ULM

#New Orleans, LA

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 7-7, 5-3 SBC

Sept.	1	Grambling	W	49-17
Sept.	15	at Mississippi State	L	10-56
Sept.	22	Coastal Carolina	L	28-30
Sept.	29	at Alabama	L	14-56
Oct.	6	at Texas State	W	42-27
Oct.	13	New Mexico State	W	66-38
Oct.	20	at Appalachian State	L	17-27
Oct.	27	Arkansas State	W	47-43
Nov.	3	at Troy	L	16-26
Nov.	10	Georgia State	W	36-22
Nov.	17	South Alabama	W	48-38
Nov.	24	at ULM	W	31-28
Dec.	1	at Appalachian State #	L	19-30
Dec.	15	vs. Tulane %	L	24-41

#SBC Championship %Cure Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Kendall Wilkerson, DE, Kentwood, LA
2. Brandon Legendre, WR, Thibodaux, LA
3. Tyler Guidry, LB, Baton Rouge, LA
4. Chandler Fields, QB, Metairie, LA
5. Logan Newell, OT, Monroe, LA
6. Jacob Bernard, WR, Mandeville, LA
7. Jaden Henderson, S, New Orleans, LA
8. O'Cyrus Torrence, OT, Greensburg, LA
9. Quintan Cobb, DT, Kaplan, LA
10. Dalvin Hutchinson, DL, West Monroe, LA

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	SBC	NATIONAL
Scoring	31.9 ppg	2	41
Rushing	218.7 ypg	3	22
Passing	205.6 ypg	5	93
Total	424.3 ypg	3	44
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**SBC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	34.2 ppg	8	105
Rushing	219.1 ypg	8	112
Passing	216.8 ypg	6	55
Total	435.9 ypg	7	97
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**SBC**	**NATIONAL**
-2	-0.14	5	81

STAT CORNER

22

According to the 247Sports Composite, UL averaged 5.3 three-star signees per year from 2016-18. In 2019, they signed 22.

OFFENSE The offense made big strides in 2018, and the pieces are in place this year for another leap forward. At running back, coach Billy Napier has the best problem a play caller can have: With three proven options, how does he keep everyone happy? The trio of Trey Ragas, Elijah Mitchell and Raymond Calais accounted for more than 3,500 yards from scrimmage, 33 touchdowns and 42 plays that gained 20 yards or more. At receiver, the Cajuns return their most reliable target, senior Ja'Marcus Bradley, who tied for the Sun Belt lead with 10 touchdown catches. Up front, the offensive line returns intact with five fifth-year seniors who started every game.

The make-or-break question is at quarterback. The heir apparent, junior Levi Lewis, made regular cameos last year, finishing with seven TD passes to just two interceptions behind departed starter Andre Nunez. But Lewis has yet to play a game from start to finish, and there were three new arrivals pushing him in the spring, including junior college signee Jai'ave Magalei. Another, three-star freshman Chandler Fields, is set to join the competition this summer.

DEFENSE Louisiana finished in the bottom half of the Sun Belt in almost every major defensive category in 2018 but was especially bad against the run. There's certainly no lack of size in the trenches between returning starters Bennie Higgins and Zi'Yon Hill, senior nose Tra'Vontae Booker and massive sophomores Timaje Porter and Masry Mapieu. Still, the incoming recruiting class includes six D-linemen with a chance to crack the rotation right away.

The pass rush should get a boost with the return of Joe Dillon, a Freshman All-American in 2016 who struggled through injuries in '17 and missed all of '18 with a hip injury. The Cajuns already have one potential breakout candidate on the edge in former Georgia signee Chauncey Manac, who recorded a team-high 8.0 tackles for a loss last year in a part-time role; the bookend potential with a healthy Dillon back in the fold is intriguing.

So, too, is the return of senior corner Michael Jacquet III, a converted receiver who went wire to wire as a starting corner in his first year at the position.

SPECIALISTS Placekicker Stevie Artigue is expected to reclaim a full-time role after sitting out 2018 with a torn ACL; his counterpart at punter will be Australia native Rhys Byrns, who allowed just 11 of his 53 attempts to be returned in his first season on campus. Calais ranks third among active FBS players in career kickoff return yards (1,952).

FINAL ANALYSIS Napier, a former assistant under both Nick Saban and Dabo Swinney, was a popular hire in Lafayette, and his first season was a hit: A team widely picked to finish near the bottom of the Sun Belt won the West Division and returned to a bowl game in what was supposed to be a rebuilding year. More important, with the lion's share of the lineup back on both sides of the ball, it hinted at bigger things to come.

A new quarterback is the ultimate X-factor. But the Cajuns have proved that they don't need a star behind center to be explosive, and while the defense may not project as a strength, it's likely to improve with good health. If last year's trip to the SBC title game was a pleasant surprise, this year it's only the baseline.

Trey Ragas

"I think it helps everyone when you have a Sun Belt team beating P5s for kids. (Billy) Napier knows how to maximize resources available."

— An opposing Sun Belt assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (8)				Returning Starters in Bold
WR	2	**Ja'Marcus Bradley (Sr.)**	85	Calif Gossett (Jr.)
WR	20	Jarrod Jackson (Sr.)	25	Jamal Bell (Jr.)
WR	18	Jalen Williams (Jr.)	7	Brian Smith Jr. (Jr.)
LT	50	**Robert Hunt (Sr.)**	74	Max Mitchell (So.)
LG	67	**Ken Marks (Sr.)**	72	Max Yarbrough (Fr.)
C	61	**Cole Prudhomme (Sr.)**	78	Luke Junkuc (Fr.)
RG	75	**Kevin Dotson (Sr.)**	71	Akkai Ward (Jr.)
RT	66	**Rico Robinson (Sr.)**	63	Spencer Gardner (So.)
TE	88	**Johnny Lumpkin (Jr.)**	80	Chase Rogers (So.)
QB	1	Levi Lewis (Jr.)	8	Jai'ave Magalei (So.)
RB	9	**Trey Ragas (Jr.)**	15	Elijah Mitchell (Jr.)
DEFENSE (7)				
DE	15	**Bennie Higgins (Sr.)**	90	Timaje Porter (So.)
NT	99	Tra'Vontae Booker (Sr.)	93	Masry Mapieu (So.)
DE	94	**Zi'Yon Hill (So.)**		Kendall Wilkerson (Fr.)
LB	3	Joe Dillon (Jr.)	7	Ferrod Gardner (Sr.)
LB	59	**Jacques Boudreaux (Sr.)**	39	Kris Moncrief (So.)
LB	17	**Chauncey Manac (Jr.)**	50	Andre Jones (So.)
STAR	38	**Terik Miller (Sr.)**	28	Ja'len Johnson (So.)
CB	11	**Michael Jacquet III (Sr.)**	9	Kamar Greenhouse (Sr.)
CB	19	Eric Garror (So.)	11	SchDarren Archie (So.)
S	25	**Deuce Wallace (Sr.)**	24	Bralen Trahan (So.)
S	26	Blair Brooks (Jr.)	27	Cameron Solomon (Jr.)
SPECIAL TEAMS				
K	36	Stevie Artigue (Sr.)	KR	4 Raymond Calais (Sr.)
P	47	Rhys Byrns (So.)	PR	2 Ja'Marcus Bradley (Sr.)

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Levi Lewis, 59-37-585-2, 7 TDs
Rushing: Trey Ragas, 207 att., 1,181 yds., 8 TDs
Receiving: Ja'Marcus Bradley, 40 rec., 608 yds., 10 TDs
Tackles: Jacques Boudreaux, 93
Sacks: Bennie Higgins, Chauncey Manac, 4.0
Interceptions: Eric Garror, Michael Jacquet III, 2

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Billy Napier
Record at School: 7-7 (1 year)
Career Record: 7-7 (1 year)
Offensive Coordinator: Rob Sale
Defensive Coordinator: Ron Roberts
Lafayette, LA • Cajun Field (41,426)

Louisiana Athletics

South Alabama **Jaguars**

National Forecast: **123** • Sun Belt West Prediction: **5** • Projected Record: **3-9, 2-6 Sun Belt**

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	at Nebraska
Sept.	7	Jackson State
Sept.	14	Memphis
Sept.	21	at UAB
Sept.	28	at ULM
Oct.	3	Georgia Southern
Oct.	16	at Troy
Oct.	26	Appalachian State
Nov.	9	at Texas State
Nov.	16	Louisiana
Nov.	23	at Georgia State
Nov.	29	Arkansas State

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 3-9, 2-6 SBC

Sept.	1	Louisiana Tech	L	26-30
Sept.	8	at Oklahoma State	L	13-55
Sept.	15	Texas State	W	41-31
Sept.	22	at Memphis	L	25-52
Sept.	29	at Appalachian State	L	7-52
Oct.	6	at Georgia Southern	L	13-48
Oct.	13	Alabama State	W	45-7
Oct.	23	Troy	L	17-38
Nov.	3	at Arkansas State	L	14-38
Nov.	10	ULM	L	10-38
Nov.	17	at Louisiana	L	38-48
Nov.	23	Coastal Carolina	W	31-28

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Tylan Morton, QB, Griffin, GA*
2. Dajon Richard, WR, Patterson, LA
3. Jamel Thomas, WR, Caledonia, MS*
4. Patrick Rosette, S, Richmond, TX*
5. Brock Higdon, DE, Pelham, AL
6. Kelvin Johnson, LB, Griffin, GA*
7. Tré Young, S, Mobile, AL*
8. Jacob Shoemaker, OG, Gulfport, MS*
9. John Gill, OG, Pensacola, FL
10. Jaden Voisin, S, Crestview, FL

*junior college transfer

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	SBC	NATIONAL
Scoring	24.2 ppg	8	100
Rushing	152.0 ypg	9	93
Passing	203.3 ypg	6	95
Total	355.3 ypg	8	106
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**SBC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	38.8 ppg	10	123
Rushing	203.0 ypg	7	101
Passing	245.7 ypg	9	90
Total	448.7 ypg	8	107
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**SBC**	**NATIONAL**
-4	-0.33	6	91

STAT CORNER

140.3

USA's team passer rating improved from 117.4 in 2017 to 140.3 in 2018. Unfortunately, opponents improved from 138.6 to 161.4.

OFFENSE South Alabama will have a new quarterback for a sixth straight season, but coach Steve Campbell hopes that this one stays for a while. Sophomore Cephus Johnson looks the part with a 6'5", 225-pound frame, a strong arm and good mobility, but he lacks experience. If he settles in, the offense has a reasonably high upside. But he needs help from the skill positions and the offensive line.

The Jaguars have a good one-two punch in running back Tra Minter and slot receiver Kawaan Baker. Minter led the Sun Belt with a school-record 1,803 all-purpose yards last season, and Baker tied a school record with 13 touchdowns running and receiving. But there is a dramatic drop-off in terms of experience from there. Sophomores Jalen Tolbert and Davyn Flenord played a little as freshmen last season. Jalen Wayne and Malik Stanley are coming off redshirt years. They need to become productive targets quickly.

Three starters return on an offensive line that struggled mightily last season. If progress is not made up front, Johnson could carry a big burden, and the team's quarterback questions will continue.

DEFENSE South Alabama was too slow on defense last season, and it showed. The Jaguars allowed 38.8 points per game and ranked third worst nationally in red zone defense. So they spent the offseason trying to find speed. Cornerback Devin Rockette and safety Tré Young, both junior college transfers, are among the fastest players on the team. Safeties Sterrling Fisher and D.J. Daniels are first-year starters, but they have more speed than their predecessors. There's a similar situation at linebacker, where experienced players have been supplanted by faster defenders.

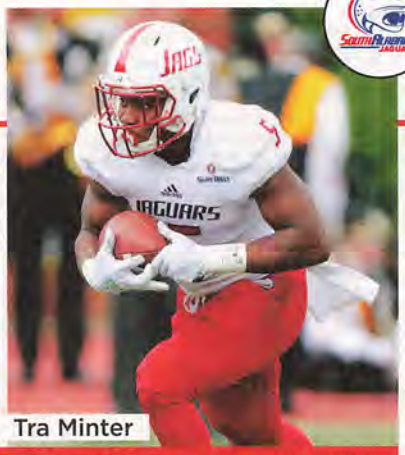
Last season, defensive coordinator Greg Stewart used both 4-3 and 3-4 schemes. But this year, he will primarily use a 3-4 set in hopes of freeing up defenders to pursue the ball carrier and limiting long runs. Linebacker Nick Mobley, a former walk-on, is the top returning tackler with 56 stops, but Roy Yancey could be a difference-maker at the Sam linebacker after returning from a foot injury that held him out of 11 games last season.

The defensive line should be a strength, led by disruptive all-conference senior Tyree Turner, who racked up 10 tackles for a loss at multiple spots up front.

SPECIALISTS Minter and Baker are both dangerous returners. Freshmen Noah Karwacki and Jack Brooks, a late signee from Australia, are the best bets to take over as kicker and punter, respectively.

FINAL ANALYSIS Stability is a must in Campbell's second season. He needs a long-term quarterback. He needs the defense to settle into a 3-4 scheme. And he needs the roster to solidify, especially after nine players entered the NCAA transfer portal in the offseason. Campbell's hope is that the Jaguars get addition by subtraction in losing players, but there's just as much chance that a rebuilding project will take more than a year.

Campbell won a Division II national title at Delta State, a junior college national title at Mississippi Gulf Coast, and an FCS Southland Conference crown at Central Arkansas, so he knows how to win. But rebuilding the Jaguars will take time.



Tra Minter

"A good-looking team across the field from you. They're big. They're long and athletic. They have an extremely talented team in my opinion."

— An opposing Sun Belt assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (5)				Returning Starters in Bold
WR	7	Malik Stanley (Sr.)	3	Davyn Flenord (So.)
WR	8	Jalen Tolbert (So.)		Jamel Thomas (Jr.)
WR	**15**	**Kawaan Baker (Jr.)**	23	Jalen Wayne (So.)
LT	77	Jacob Shoemaker (Jr.)	65	Josh McCulloch (Fr.)
LG	**73**	**Hadon Merchant (So.)**	64	Max Charite (Sr.)
C	**66**	**Brian Anderson (Jr.)**	51	Tyler Jernigan (Fr.)
RG	71	Roy Albritton (Sr.)	69	Kent Foster (Jr.)
RT	**70**	**Troy Thingstad (Jr.)**	76	Connor Estes (So.)
TE	84	Khameron Taylor (Jr.)	85	Zac Crosby (Jr.)
QB	2	Cephus Johnson (So.)	11	Desmond Trotter (Fr.)
RB	**5**	**Tra Minter (Sr.)**	33	John Tank Miller (Fr.)
DEFENSE (4)				
DE	99	Jeffery Whatley (Sr.)	98	Rocel McWilliams (Sr.)
NT	74	Sean Brown (Sr.)	**49**	**Jordon Beaton (Sr.)**
DE	**12**	**Tyree Turner (Sr.)**	42	Jeremiah Littles (Jr.)
LB	4	Riley Cole (Jr.)	3	A.J. DeShazor (So.)
LB	14	Roy Yancey (Jr.)	37	Kade Koler (So.)
LB	**46**	**Nick Mobley (So.)**		Kelvin Johnson (So.)
LB	27	Khalil McDonald (Sr.)	23	Patrick Rosette (Jr.)
CB	**1**	**Jalen Thompson (Sr.)**	15	Tyrone Legette (So.)
CB	6	Devin Rockette (Jr.)	11	Gus Nave (So.)
S	9	Sterrling Fisher (Jr.)	25	Tyrone Hall (So.)
S	13	D.J. Daniels (Sr.)	5	Tré Young (Jr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	Noah Karwacki (Fr.)	**KR**	5	Tra Minter (Sr.)
P	Jack Brooks (Fr.)	**PR**	5	Tra Minter (Sr.)

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Cephus Johnson, 19-7-120-1, 3 TDs
Rushing: Tra Minter, 183 att., 801 yds., 6 TDs
Receiving: Kawaan Baker, 33 rec., 494 yds., 4 TDs
Tackles: Nick Mobley, 56
Sacks: Tyree Turner, 4.0
Interceptions: Jalen Thompson, 3

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Steve Campbell
Record at School: 3-9 (1 year)
Career Record: 63-32 (8 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Kenny Edenfield
Defensive Coordinator: Greg Stewart
Mobile, AL • Ladd-Peebles Stadium (33,471)

South Alabama Athletics

Texas State **Bobcats**

National Forecast: **116** • Sun Belt West Prediction: **4** • Projected Record: **4-8, 3-5 Sun Belt**

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	at Texas A&M
Sept.	7	Wyoming
Sept.	14	at SMU
Sept.	21	Georgia State
Sept.	28	Nicholls Sate
Oct.	10	ULM
Oct.	26	at Arkansas State
Nov.	2	at Louisiana
Nov.	9	South Alabama
Nov.	16	Troy
Nov.	23	at Appalachian State
Nov.	30	at Coastal Carolina

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 3-9, 1-7 SBC

Sept.	1	at Rutgers	L	7-35
Sept.	8	Texas Southern	W	36-20
Sept.	15	at South Alabama	L	31-41
Sept.	22	at UTSA	L	21-25
Oct.	6	Louisiana	L	27-42
Oct.	11	Georgia Southern	L	13-15
Oct.	20	at ULM	L	14-20
Oct.	27	New Mexico State	W	27-20
Nov.	3	at Georgia State	W	40-31
Nov.	10	Appalachian State	L	7-38
Nov.	17	at Troy	L	7-12
Nov.	24	Arkansas State	L	7-33

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Dylan Jantz, WR, Gunter, TX
2. Kevin Anderson, S, Lewisville, TX
3. Calvin Hill, RB, Baytown, TX
4. Dalton Cooper, OT, Prague, OK
5. Gresch Jensen, QB, Auburn, WA*
6. Devin Henderson, DT, La Porte, TX
7. Jordan Revels, DE, Houston, TX
8. Cedric Case, QB, Lincoln, NE
9. Edward Rivas, OG, Phoenix, AZ*
10. Ronald Copney, OG, New Braunfels, TX

*junior college transfer

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	SBC	NATIONAL
Scoring	19.8 ppg	10	122
Rushing	148.1 ypg	10	96
Passing	182.2 ypg	8	105
Total	330.3 ypg	10	120
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**SBC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	27.7 ppg	5	74
Rushing	182.3 ypg	4	81
Passing	201.6 ypg	3	39
Total	383.9 ypg	5	53
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**SBC**	**NATIONAL**
-5	-0.42	7	104

STAT CORNER

5.1

The Bobcats' defensive improvement began on first down: They went from allowing 6.8 yards per play (115th) to 5.1 (28th).

OFFENSE The lowest-scoring (19.8 ppg) and least productive (330.3 ypg) offense in the Sun Belt last year got a facelift this offseason with the addition of head coach Jake Spavital and offensive coordinator Bob Stitt. While Spavital is a known quarterback savant, Stitt is considered an offensive pioneer who innovated many plays — like the jet-sweep toss — that are now staples in offenses at every level.

Stitt is reunited with Fullerton (Calif.) College transfer Gresch Jensen, who started 10 games at quarterback for Montana in 2017 with Stitt as the head coach. Jensen's familiarity with the new system has him as the front-runner under center despite the presence of returning sophomores Tyler Vitt and Jaylen Gipson. Vitt started five games last year in place of an injured Willie Jones III, who chose not to return to Texas State following his sophomore season.

Receivers coach Ron Antoine — the only returning on-field coach from the previous staff — will have arguably the deepest position on offense with seven of Texas State's top 10 pass catchers returning. One who won't be back is tight end Keenen Brown, who declared for the NFL Draft after leading the Bobcats in receptions, receiving yards and TDs last season.

DEFENSE The two leading tacklers in the Sun Belt last season — senior inside linebackers Bryan London II (109 tackles) and Nikolas Daniels (108) — are returning along with most of the defensive roster. Depth and experience will not be an issue for the 2019 unit, with 13 of the team's 19 seniors residing on defense, including eight linebackers.

Sophomore Nico Ezidore has been filling the void on the defensive line left by Dean Taylor, who had to quit football due to lingering injuries. Ezidore has been playing nose tackle, with senior Ishmael Davis and junior Caeveon Patton on the ends. New defensive coordinator Zac Spavital said in the spring that the scheme would switch between a 3-4 and a 4-3.

Senior Anthony J. Taylor moved to safety after starting at corner the last three years. He is expected to start in the back end alongside senior JaShon Waddy, with junior Kordell Rodgers and sophomore Jarron Morris taking over at corner.

SPECIALISTS The Bobcats converted only 6-of-14 field goal attempts last season. Sophomore Foster Hilborn returns after missing 2018 with a torn ACL. Hilborn, who made 4-of-6 attempts in 2017, has been competing with redshirt freshman Chris Kessler. Senior punt returner Hutch White and junior kick returner Jeremiah Haydel are back as the primary returners this season. White finished second in the conference with 10.4 yards per return on 16 punts, while Haydel averaged 24.3 yards on 10 returns.

FINAL ANALYSIS The excuse of youthful inexperience is no longer viable, as the Bobcats have a roster full of upperclassmen and are as close to the 85-scholarship limit allowed for FBS teams as they've ever been. They are returning a stout defense and have brought in new coaches to revamp an ineffective offense.

Jake Spavital was 33 when he got the job, making him the second-youngest coach to earn his first FBS job, but he has an impressive résumé and has surrounded himself with coaches with P5 experience. Concerns at quarterback, offensive line and in the kicking game need to be addressed, but six wins aren't out of reach.

Bryan London II

"I thought they had some good defensive personnel last season. One thing that jumped out is their team speed. The roster isn't as bad as you think."

— An opposing Sun Belt assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (6)				Returning Starters in Bold
WR	80	Hutch White (Sr.)	1	Jah'Marae Sheread (Fr.)
WR	12	Javen Banks (So.)	13	T.J. Graham (So.)
WR	**3**	**Jeremiah Haydel (Jr.)**	**10**	**Mason Hays (Sr.)**
LT	76	Kylar Cooks (Fr.)		Dalton Cooper (Fr.)
LG	**72**	**Jacob Rowland (Sr.)**	**74**	**Jalen Momerelle (So.)**
C	**55**	**Aaron Brewer (Sr.)**	62	Jacob Fryrear (Jr.)
RG	**50**	**Reece Jordan (Jr.)**		Edward Rivas (Jr.)
RT	65	Kameron Jemison (Jr.)	56	Morgan Moore (Fr.)
TE	15	Blake Aragon (Fr.)	82	Brendon Rushing (Sr.)
QB	2	Gresch Jensen (Jr.)	7	Jaylen Gipson (So.)
RB	25	Anthony D. Taylor (Sr.)	21	Anthony Smith (So.)
DEFENSE (10)				
DE	**11**	**Ishmael Davis (Sr.)**	7	Kumonde Hines (Sr.)
DT	95	Nico Ezidore (So.)	98	Gjemar Daniels (Jr.)
DE	**88**	**Caeveon Patton (Jr.)**	73	Jaquel Pierce (Jr.)
OLB	**18**	**Frankie Griffin (Sr.)**	12	Clifton Lewis Jr. (Sr.)
ILB	**9**	**Bryan London II (Sr.)**	40	Malik Alley (Sr.)
ILB	**30**	**Nikolas Daniels (Sr.)**	44	John Brannon (Jr.)
OLB	8	Hal Vinson (Sr.)	4	Gavin Graham (Sr.)
CB	**15**	**Jarron Morris (So.)**	2	Alvin Pacheco (Sr.)
CB	**3**	**Kordell Rodgers (Jr.)**	26	Kieston Roach (So.)
S	**16**	**JaShon Waddy (Sr.)**	**21**	**Josh Newman (Jr.)**
S	**6**	**Anthony J. Taylor (Sr.)**		Kevin Anderson (Fr.)
SPECIAL TEAMS				
K	48	Foster Hilborn (So.)	**KR** 3	Jeremiah Haydel (Jr.)
P	39	Clayton Stewart (So.)	**PR** 80	Hutch White (Sr.)

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Tyler Vitt, 191-116-1,159-10, 7 TDs
Rushing: Anthony D. Taylor, 86 att., 312 yds., 4 TDs
Receiving: Hutch White, 34 rec., 298 yds., 2 TDs
Tackles: Bryan London II, 109
Sacks: Ishmael Davis, 3.5
Interceptions: Kordell Rodgers, 2

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Jake Spavital
Record at School: First Season
Career Record: First Season
Offensive Coordinator: Bob Stitt
Defensive Coordinators: Archie McDaniel, Zac Spavital
San Marcos, TX • Bobcat Stadium (30,000)

Texas State Athletics

ULM **Warhawks**

National Forecast: **103** • Sun Belt West Prediction: **3** • Projected Record: **5-7, 4-4 Sun Belt**

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	29	Grambling
Sept.	7	at Florida State
Sept.	21	at Iowa State
Sept.	28	South Alabama
Oct.	5	Memphis
Oct.	10	at Texas State
Oct.	19	at Appalachian State
Nov.	2	Arkansas State
Nov.	9	Georgia State
Nov.	16	at Georgia Southern
Nov.	23	Coastal Carolina
Nov.	30	at Louisiana

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 6-6, 4-4 SBC

Aug.	30	SE Louisiana	W	34-31
Sept.	8	at Southern Miss	W	21-20
Sept.	15	at Texas A&M	L	10-48
Sept.	22	Troy	L	27-35
Sept.	29	at Georgia State	L	14-46
Oct.	6	at Ole Miss	L	21-70
Oct.	13	at Coastal Carolina	W	45-20
Oct.	20	Texas State	W	20-14
Nov.	3	Georgia Southern	W	44-25
Nov.	10	at South Alabama	W	38-10
Nov.	17	at Arkansas State	L	17-31
Nov.	24	Louisiana	L	28-31

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Kevin Pointer, DT, Jonesboro, AR
2. Kadyn Roach, RB, Magnolia, AR
3. Xavier Curry, LB, Meridian, MS
4. Keilos Swinney, S, Bentonia, MS*
5. Chance Billington, OG, Tyler, TX
6. Evan Henry, OG, DeSoto, TX
7. Kevric Wiggins, CB, Spring, TX
8. Chandler Whitfield, WR, Zachary, LA
9. Demarcus Jones, S, Keller, TX
10. Tavier Williams, CB, Many, LA

*junior college transfer

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	SBC	NATIONAL
Scoring	26.6 ppg	7	85
Rushing	167.3 ypg	8	69
Passing	247.5 ypg	2	51
Total	414.8 ypg	4	53
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**SBC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	31.8 ppg	6	92
Rushing	182.7 ypg	5	82
Passing	247.1 ypg	10	94
Total	429.8 ypg	6	91
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**SBC**	**NATIONAL**
-12	-1.00	10	125

STAT CORNER

-9.2

ULM's defense allowed 9.2 fewer points per game than in 2017. Unfortunately, the Warhawks' offense scored 7.3 fewer, too.

OFFENSE Quarterback Caleb Evans is already a top-five passer in program history, posting back-to-back 2,800-yard seasons. But his interceptions climbed from six in 2017 to 12 in 2018. He must protect the ball for the Warhawks to bounce back from recording the Sun Belt's worst turnover margin last season.

Evans' receivers must step up after the graduation of go-to guy Marcus Green and the departure (via transfer) of RJ Truner, the projected No. 1 option in 2019. Markis McCray will become a prime target. Xavier Brown, who has 65 career catches, returns from a shoulder injury to solidify the group. ULM has developed a deeper group of tight ends for more goal line options after it had the second-worst red zone efficiency in the nation last season.

A more diversified running game could also help. Evans rushed for more yards (632) than running backs Austin Vaughn (232) and Kayin White (147) combined last season, but the backs could get more carries in 2019. Aside from Evans, the best sign that the offense can thrive is the return of all five starters on the offensive line, led by all-conference selections Bobby Reynolds and T.J. Fiailoa.

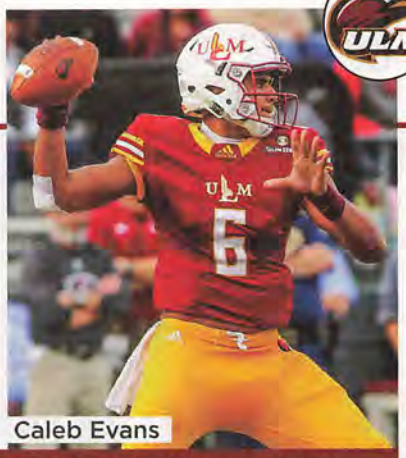
DEFENSE ULM improved from one of the nation's worst defenses in 2017 to the middle of the pack in the Sun Belt last season. Five of the top seven tacklers return, paced by linebackers Cortez Sisco (53 tackles) and Chase Day (48) and safeties Jabari Johnson (51) and Austin Hawley (50).

Despite last year's improvement, there were still areas of weakness. ULM ranked third in the Sun Belt in sacks and tackles for a loss, but it had only 11 takeaways in 12 games. Even with a solid pass rush, the Warhawks had the league's worst passing defense and snagged only five interceptions. There are reasons for optimism in the secondary. Hawley, Johnson and cornerback Corey Straughter can hold their own, and others should benefit from playing time last season. Cornerback Rhoy Williams, a projected starter before a 2018 preseason knee injury, is back, and junior college transfer Keilos Swinney adds depth.

There's a big asterisk on the defensive line, where Jaylen Veasley and Kerry Starks were arrested in the spring. With them in the lineup, ULM can be disruptive. Without them, there are obvious deficiencies.

SPECIALISTS Jared Porter returns as a proven punter, but he may also take over placekicking duties. The other options are Jacob Meeks, who handled kickoffs last season, and Devin Parker. McCray and Perry Carter have experience as returners, but those roles could be fluid.

FINAL ANALYSIS Coach Matt Viator's third season was bittersweet. ULM reached bowl eligibility for the first time since 2013, but it was one of four eligible FBS teams not to get a bid. The Warhawks have come a long way since the 2–11 team that Viator inherited, but this season's climb may be more difficult with a tough nonconference slate. A winning season is in reach, but ULM must take the next step. Its offense can move the ball, but it must finish drives and convert in the red zone. Its defense can apply pressure, but it must follow through with takeaways. ULM lost its shot at a West Division title last season with back-to-back losses to Arkansas State and Louisiana. Those same two games could determine if the Warhawks have a chance to contend in the West.



Caleb Evans

"That job is harder than people know. It's a good area (for recruiting), but they get little support. They do a good job with what they have."

— An opposing Sun Belt assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (7)			Returning Starters in Bold		
WR	7	Zachari Jackson (So.)	18	Jonathan Hodoh
WR	12	Markis McCray (Sr.)	14	Perry Carter (So.)
WR	**17**	**Xavier Brown (Sr.)**	4	Brandius Batiste (Jr.)
LT	**77**	**Trace Ellison (Sr.)**	70	Blake Lodes (Fr.)
LG	**73**	**Devin Jackson (Sr.)**	78	Brandon Jones (Sr.)
C	**56**	**Bobby Reynolds (Sr.)**	75	John Bolding (Fr.)
RG	**68**	**T.J. Fiailoa (Jr.)**	65	Dakota Torbert (So.)
RT	**64**	**Eastwood Thomas (Sr.)**	72	Sam Williams (Jr.)
TE	86	Josh Pederson (Jr.)	88	Tyler Lamm (Jr.)
QB	**6**	**Caleb Evans (Sr.)**	16	Colby Suits (Fr.)
RB	33	Austin Vaughn (Sr.)	25	Kayin White (Jr.)
DEFENSE (9)				
DE	**98**	**Sam Miller (Sr.)**	95	Myles Cole (Fr.)
NT	**48**	**Larance Shaw (Sr.)**	71	John Washington (Sr.)
DT	**90**	**Jaylen Veasley (Sr.)**	93	Mason Husmann (Jr.)
DE	**58**	**Donald Louis (Sr.)**	44	Ty Shelby (Jr.)
BUCK	**24**	**Jabari Johnson (So.)**	6	Keilos Swinney (Jr.)
MLB	32	Chase Day (Sr.)	**4**	**Rashaad Harding (Jr.)**
WLB	7	Cortez Sisco (Sr.)	37	Traveion Webster (Jr.)
CB	**21**	**Corey Straughter (Jr.)**	13	Rhoy Williams (Sr.)
CB	20	Kenderick Marbles (Jr.)	27	Jordan Oliver (Fr.)
S	1	Tyler Glass (Jr.)	28	Kevin Jones (Fr.)
S	**15**	**Austin Hawley (Jr.)**	**23**	**Nick Ingram (Sr.)**
SPECIAL TEAMS				
K	37	Jared Porter (So.)	**KR** 12	Markis McCray (Sr.)
P	37	Jared Porter (So.)	**PR** 14	Perry Carter (So.)

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Caleb Evans, 374-231-2,869-12, 16 TDs
Rushing: Caleb Evans, 140 att., 632 yds., 10 TDs
Receiving: Zachari Jackson, 11 rec., 160 yds., 1 TD
Tackles: Cortez Sisco, 53
Sacks: Donald Louis, 4.5
Interceptions: Corey Straughter, 2

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Matt Viator
Record at School: 14-22 (3 years)
Career Record: 92-55 (13 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Matt Kubik
Defensive Coordinator: Mike Collins
Monroe, LA • Malone Stadium (30,427)

ULM Photo Services

BYU **Cougars**

National Forecast: **55** • Projected Record: **7-5**

Zach Wilson

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Kalani Sitake
Record at School: 20-19 (3 years)
Career Record: 20-19 (3 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Jeff Grimes
Defensive Coordinator: Ilaisa Tuiaki
Location: Provo, UT
Stadium: LaVell Edwards Stadium (63,470)

KEY COUGARS

ZACH WILSON, QB Had a perfect 18-for-18 passing performance for 317 yards and four TDs in the bowl game.

MATT BUSHMAN, TE Plagued by several nagging injuries but still led the Cougars in receiving with 29 catches for 511 yards and two TDs.

DAYAN GHANWOLOKU, DB Recovered four fumbles and recorded two pass break-ups and became the Cougars' best playmaker on defense in 2018.

KEY LOSSES

SIONE TAKITAKI, LB Led the Cougars with 118 tackles, including three sacks. Forced a fumble and recorded eight quarterback hurries.

CORBIN KAUFUSI, DE Two-sport star put his 6'9" frame to good use by recording a team-high 8.5 sacks and batting down five passes.

SQUALLY CANADA, RB Slowed by injuries that limited his playing time in 2018 but still rushed for 412 yards and was a key leader.

RISING STAR

Promising freshman Dallin Holker is leaving on a two-year church mission, but coaches believe they have found his replacement in redshirt freshman **DARIUS MCFARLAND** to play the hybrid fullback/tight end position. McFarland is almost a carbon copy of Holker athletically.

After BYU went 9–4 in his first season and then dropped precipitously to 4–9 in his second year, Cougars coach Kalani Sitake was clearly on the hot seat in Year 3 in Provo. Known as a players coach with a fun-loving attitude and relaxed style of leadership, Sitake instilled more discipline, toughness and accountability into the program and delivered just enough wins in 2018 — a 7–6 mark, including a 49–18 win over Western Michigan in the Famous Idaho Potato Bowl — to earn himself at least two more years in Provo.

The 2019 season figures to be just as important for Sitake's future, because the five-year contract he signed in 2015 expires after the 2020 season. However, it won't be easy to duplicate last season's winning record, given the schedule.

BYU opens against arch-rival Utah — the first time these 100-year foes will face off in an opener — and also has September home games against USC and Washington and road games at Tennessee and Toledo.

Given that the October schedule includes a cross-county trip to South Florida, a home contest against longtime nemesis Boise State, and a short bus ride to much-improved Utah State following a bye, it is not out of the realm of possibility for the Cougars to have to endure a lengthy losing streak, like the seven-game skid in 2017 that cost offensive coordinator Ty Detmer his job.

OFFENSE LSU offensive line coach and running game coordinator Jeff Grimes replaced Detmer prior to the 2018 season and produced immediate results. The Cougars had nowhere to go but up, and up they went as Grimes brought some fly sweeps and run-pass option plays from SEC country. After a 3–3 start, Sitake and Grimes sent senior starter Tanner Mangum to the bench in favor of untested freshman Zach Wilson, and the precocious teenager revived the stagnating attack and gave Cougar fans hope for the future. Wilson is the clear-cut starter in 2019, despite having offseason shoulder surgery to repair an injury that had lingered since high school.

The offense still lacks bona fide playmakers. The addition of graduate transfer running back Ty'Son Williams, who spent his freshman season at North Carolina and the last two seasons at South Carolina, should give the BYU running backs group a much-needed jolt, considering that leading returning rusher Lopini Katoa has been injury prone and Squally Canada graduated.

At receiver, big things are expected of sophomore Gunner Romney after the four-star recruit from Arizona was hampered by hamstring issues his rookie year. Star tight end Matt Bushman missed spring practices due to offseason shoulder surgery but should emerge again as one of Wilson's favorite targets.

The Cougars will also have a deep and experienced offensive line in 2019 for new position coach Eric Mateos to work with, led by Freshman All-Americans James Empey (center) and Brady Christensen (left tackle), who are now sophomores.

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	29	Utah
Sept.	7	at Tennessee
Sept.	14	USC
Sept.	21	Washington
Sept.	28	at Toledo
Oct.	12	at South Florida
Oct.	19	Boise State
Nov.	2	at Utah State
Nov.	9	Liberty
Nov.	16	Idaho State
Nov.	23	at Massachusetts
Nov.	30	at San Diego State

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 7-6

Sept.	1	at Arizona	W	28-23
Sept.	8	California	L	18-21
Sept.	15	at Wisconsin	W	24-21
Sept.	22	McNeese State	W	30-3
Sept.	29	at Washington	L	7-35
Oct.	5	Utah State	L	20-45
Oct.	13	Hawaii	W	49-23
Oct.	27	Northern Illinois	L	6-7
Nov.	3	at Boise State	L	16-21
Nov.	10	vs. Massachusetts #	W	35-16
Nov.	17	New Mexico State	W	45-10
Nov.	24	at Utah	L	27-35
Dec.	21	vs. Western Michigan %	W	49-18

#Foxboro %Idaho Potato Bowl

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	NATIONAL
Scoring	27.2 ppg	79
Rushing	153.2 ypg	90
Passing	211.8 ypg	86
Total	364.9 ypg	101
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	21.4 ppg	24
Rushing	130.1 ypg	27
Passing	194.0 ypg	29
Total	324.1 ypg	18
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**NATIONAL**
+1	+0.08	57

2019 RECRUITS

1. Jacob Conover, QB, Chandler, AZ
2. Cade Albright, DL, San Juan Capistrano, CA
3. Eli Unutoa, OG, Kapa'a, HI
4. Blake Freeland, ATH, Herriman, UT
5. Chase Roberts, WR, American Fork, UT
6. Brock Gunderson, OT, Cypress, TX
7. Michael Daley, LB, American Fork, UT
8. Caleb Christensen, CB, Smithfield, UT
9. Eric Ellison, CB, Banning, CA*
10. Brooks Maile, DE, St. George, UT
11. George Udo, DB, Walnut Creek, CA
12. Ethan Erickson, TE, Kahuku, HI
13. Carter Wheat, TE, Mesa, AZ
14. Dimitri Gallow, CB, Moreno Valley, CA*
15. Keanu Hill, WR, Euless, TX
16. Bruce Mitchell, OT, Kamas, UT
17. Javelle Brown, ATH, San Diego, CA
18. Luc Andrada, ATH, Pueblo, CA

*junior college transfer

Recruits ranked according to the 247SportsComposite

BYU Athletics

ADVANCED STATS

5 Factors: College Football's Most Important Stats

Field Position[1]		Rank
Offense	31.5	27
Defense	29.5	71
Margin	+2.0	47

Efficiency[2]		Rank
Offense	43.3%	52
Defense	41.7%	71
Margin	+1.6%	63

Explosiveness[3]		Rank
Offense	5.5	78
Defense	4.7	17
Margin	+0.8	28

Finishing Drives[4]		Rank
Offense	4.9	34
Defense	4.3	45
Margin	+0.6	28

Adjusted TO Margin[5]		Rank
Projected	-1.9	88
Actual	1	57
Margin	+2.9	37

KEY: 1-Average starting field position by yard line; **2**-Rate of successful plays (gaining 50% of necessary yards on 1st down, 70% on 2nd down, 100% on 3rd down); **3**-Explosiveness=yards per play; **4**-Points per trip inside 40-yard line; **5**-TO margin accounting for "luck" • Advanced stats provided by Bill Connelly of SB Nation

NUMBERS TO KNOW

+1.0

BYU's offense improved by 0.4 yards per play, from 5.1 (106th in FBS) to 5.5 (78th). The defense improved from 5.3 (46th) to 4.7 (17th). The resulting plus-1.0 margin of improvement was 20th best overall.

2.7

The primary source of that defensive improvement: big-play prevention. The Cougars allowed just 2.7 gains per game of 20-plus yards (fifth in FBS), 2.9 rushes of 10-plus (fifth), and 0.7 passes of 30-plus (seventh). You had to take your time to score on BYU.

2004

BYU's 4–9 campaign in 2017 was its first losing season since 2004. Back then, the Cougars improved a little the next year (to 6–6), then surged to 11–2. Are they capable of something similar 13 years later?

DEFENSE Fourth-year defensive coordinator Ilaisa Tuiaki has quietly built a solid defense at BYU. The Cougars ranked No. 18 in the country in total defense and lost only a few major contributors from that unit, most notably linebacker Sione Takitaki, defensive end Corbin Kaufusi and cornerback Michael Shelton.

Tuiaki said in March that he felt like the defense struggled a bit in spring practices, especially in the spring game, but will revert to its normal self when injured players such as linebacker Zayne Anderson, cornerback Chris Wilcox and safety Austin Lee return from offseason surgeries.

Defensive tackle Khyiris Tonga, a mountain of a man at 6'4", 340 pounds, is as good a run stopper as BYU has had in quite some time, while senior safety Dayan Ghanwoloku is known as a playmaker in the secondary.

BYU traditionally struggles to find capable cornerbacks, but position coach Jernaro Gilford likes what he sees in Wilcox, D'Angelo Mandell and Isaiah Herron, among others.

SPECIALISTS Special teams coach Ed Lamb said at the end of spring practices that sophomores Skyler Southam and Jake Oldroyd were neck-and-neck in the competition to be BYU's placekicker in 2019. Southam is the incumbent, having booted 11 field goals in 2018. BYU went hunting in Australia for a punter a few years ago and found 6'4" Aussie rules football player Danny Jones to its liking. The junior will handle the punting chores, while Southam and Oldroyd stand ready if he falters when coaches call for something other than rugby punts.

FINAL ANALYSIS Sitake spent a lot of the spring talking about the need to build depth and stay healthy after the Cougars faltered mightily in a fourth quarter meltdown that led to a 35–27 loss to Utah last November. BYU's frontline players are good enough to compete with the four Power 5 opponents on its schedule, but the season could turn in the wrong direction quickly if some key performers can't step up, especially on defense.

Wilson appears to be the real deal at quarterback. If a couple go-to receivers emerge and some talented but inexperienced running backs deliver, he's poised to have a record-setting season behind one of the better O-lines in school history.

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (8)

WR	**15**	**Aleva Hifo (Sr.)**	82	Dax Milne (So.)
WR	18	Gunner Romney (So.)	13	Micah Simon (Sr.)
WR	2	Neil Pau'u (Jr.)	**21**	**Talon Shumway (Sr.)**
LT	**67**	**Brady Christensen (So.)**	59	Thomas Shoaf (Sr.)
LG	74	Kieffer Longson (Jr.)	**61**	**Keanu Saleapaga (So.)**
C	**66**	**James Empey (So.)**	73	Caden Haws (Fr.)
RG	**69**	**Tristen Hoge (Jr.)**	77	Chandon Herring (Jr.)
RT	76	Harris LaChance (Fr.)	68	JT Gentry (Fr.)
TE	**89**	**Matt Bushman (Jr.)**	17	Moroni Laulu-Pututau (Sr.)
QB	**1**	**Zach Wilson (So.)**	3	Jaren Hall (Fr.)
RB	4	Lopini Katoa (So.)		Ty'Son Williams (Sr.)

DEFENSE (6)

Returning Starters in Bold

DE	90	Devin Kaufusi (So.)	58	Uriah Leiataua (Jr.)
DT	**95**	**Khyiris Tonga (Jr.)**	57	Alden Tofa (So.)
DT	55	Lorenzo Fauatea (So.)	**93**	**Bracken El-Bakri (Jr.)**
DE	**52**	**Trajan Pili (Sr.)**	99	Zac Dawe (Jr.)
OLB	23	Zayne Anderson (Sr.)	3	Chaz Ah You (So.)
MLB	47	Jackson Kaufusi (Fr.)	41	Keenan Pili (Fr.)
OLB	53	Isaiah Kaufusi (Jr.)	31	Max Tooley (Fr.)
CB	**32**	**Chris Wilcox (Sr.)**	11	Isaiah Herron (Fr.)
CB	7	Trevion Greene (Sr.)	36	D'Angelo Mandell (So.)
SS	**5**	**Dayan Ghanwoloku (Sr.)**	1	Troy Warner (Sr.)
FS	**2**	**Austin Lee (Sr.)**	12	Malik Moore (So.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	20	Skyler Southam (So.)	KR	15	Aleva Hifo (Sr.)
P	19	Danny Jones (Jr.)	PR	5	Dayan Ghanwoloku (Sr.)

2018 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Zach Wilson	**182**	**120**	**1,578**	**12**	**3**
Tanner Mangum	186	114	1,104	5	4

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD
Lopini Katoa	**76**	**423**	**5.6**	**8**
Squally Canada	91	412	4.5	5
Matt Hadley	72	383	5.3	6
Riley Burt	59	323	5.5	2

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Matt Bushman	**29**	**511**	**17.6**	**2**
Aleva Hifo	**28**	**358**	**12.8**	**2**
Dylan Collie	24	277	11.5	3
Talon Shumway	**22**	**337**	**15.3**	**3**

KICKING: Skyler Southam, 11-16 FGs, 75 pts.

TACKLES: Sione Takitaki, 118; Corbin Kaufusi, 56

SACKS: Corbin Kaufusi, 8.5

INTERCEPTIONS: Isaiah Kaufusi, 2; Austin Lee, 2

Returning Players in **Bold**

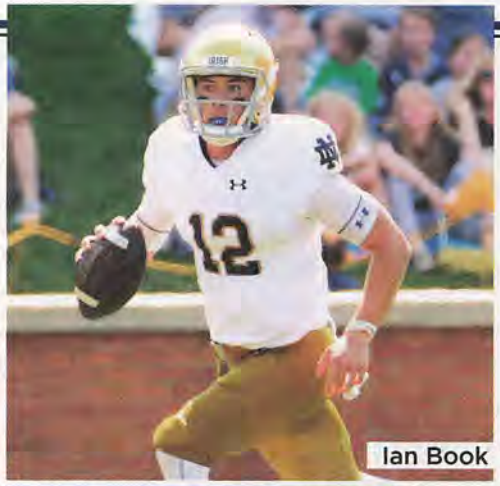
SCOUTING THE COUGARS

OPPOSING COACHES SIZE UP BYU

"This has always been a program that struggles with how it perceives itself more than anything to do with actual football. They left the Mountain West trying to get to the Big 12 and it didn't happen. They pressure Bronco Mendenhall out thinking he was the reason they weren't winning 10 and 11 a year. He wasn't. They're a good football program with a lot of unique drawbacks. They aren't Notre Dame. That's probably not possible. … They're going to be really strong up front on offense. They really benefit from the Mormon mission exemption to get big, mature lineman, but they've got experience there this year. … They did a lot on offense — you got the idea they were experimenting. You saw them against Wisconsin, they can pound on you. Jeff Grimes has done a good job with play calling for the most part. That grinding run game is not the BYU football we all knew but it works pretty well. … They're losing a lot at linebacker, but they're always really well coached and they have more size and speed than you expect in the front of that defense. … You can't really judge their recruiting until you see the new guys on film because they're literally out of sight for years. Occasionally that can catch you off guard when you're scouting them. It's a great advantage."

Notre Dame **Fighting Irish**

National Forecast: **9** • Projected Record: **10-2**


Ian Book

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Brian Kelly
Record at School: 81-35 (9 years)
Career Record: 252-92-2 (28+ years)
Offensive Coordinator: Chip Long
Defensive Coordinator: Clark Lea
Location: South Bend, IN
Stadium: Notre Dame Stadium (77,622)

KEY FIGHTING IRISH

JULIAN OKWARA, DE Became an unstoppable force off the edge for the Irish in '18 with 21 QB hurries and eight sacks. Must be accounted for on every passing down.

IAN BOOK, QB Ignited the Notre Dame offense in '18 when he became the starter in the fourth game.

ALOHI GILMAN, S Plays the game with an attitude that screams leadership. Joined forces with fellow safety Jalen Elliott to reverse ND's fortunes on the back end of the defense.

KEY LOSSES

JULIAN LOVE, CB Shattered the school mark for passes defended in a single-season (23) and career (44) before leaving for the NFL.

JERRY TILLERY, DT A physical freak with the length to play defensive end or offensive tackle.

DRUE TRANQUILL, LB Combined with Te'von Coney to form a tandem that produced 605 tackles, 49.0 TFLs, 20 QB hurries, and 12.5 sacks in their careers.

RISING STAR

Running back **JAFAR ARMSTRONG** didn't reach his potential in '18. Injuries and Dexter Williams' emergence after a suspension prevented Armstrong from fully flourishing. But he scored seven touchdowns on 72 carries and is one of the most dedicated players on the team.

For the first time since Lou Holtz stalked the sideline for the Irish more than two decades ago, Notre Dame has put together back-to-back double-digit-winning seasons. In fact, that's three of the last four years, which is approaching the rarified air breathed by Holtz from 1986-96.

So is Brian Kelly on the verge of competing for a CFB Playoff spot on a regular basis, or is a market correction due?

Based upon the talent returning from a 12–1 squad that lost to eventual national champion Clemson, the depth accrued by Kelly and his staff, and a schedule that looks manageable, the arrow is pointing up.

OFFENSE Notre Dame's 2019 offense is primed to approximate last year's 37.2 points per game over the final nine regular-season games. Led by quarterback Ian Book, four returning starters along the line and a pass-catching unit that was the most pleasant surprise of the spring, the Irish should exceed the best single-season scoring mark under Kelly (34.2 ppg in 2017) in the 10th year of his Notre Dame reign.

Book, who took over as the starting quarterback in place of Brandon Wimbush in the fourth game of the 2018 season, exploded onto the scene, throwing at least two touchdown passes in all eight of his regular-season starts while averaging 306.9 yards passing per game.

Book and the Irish running backs should benefit greatly from the return of offensive line starters Robert Hainsey and Liam Eichenberg at tackle and Tommy Kraemer and Aaron Banks at guard. Third-year offensive coordinator Chip Long emphasizes the running game but won't miss on the opportunity to take advantage of Book's passing prowess.

Breakaway back Dexter Williams is gone, but former receiver Jafar Armstrong looks like a capable replacement, with two-year contributor Tony Jones Jr. combining with him to form a notable tandem and an adept pass-catching duo out of the backfield.

Chase Claypool is the projected go-to receiver following Miles Boykin's departure. Former walk-on Chris Finke is an elusive slot receiver. Michael Young is ready to ascend as the third starter at receiver with a promising quartet of sophomore wideouts waiting in the wings.

Tight end perennially is a strong position for the Irish. The 2019 season should be no different, with Cole Kmet a potential standout joined by classmate Brock Wright.

DEFENSE Clark Lea had it pretty good in his rookie season at the helm of the Irish defense. Lea benefited from the decisions by defensive tackle Jerry Tillery and linebackers Drue Tranquill and Te'von Coney to stick around Notre Dame for another season. Lea rebuilt the back end of the defense with safeties Jalen Elliott and Navy transfer Alohi Gilman, and he reaped the benefits of record-setting cornerback Julian Love with rising standout Troy Pride Jr. Tillery, Tranquill, Coney, Love and nose tackle Jonathan Bonner all are gone, which offers a unique challenge for the 37-year-old Lea.

2019 SCHEDULE

Sept.	2	at Louisville
Sept.	14	New Mexico
Sept.	21	at Georgia
Sept.	28	Virginia
Oct.	5	Bowling Green
Oct.	12	USC
Oct.	26	at Michigan
Nov.	2	Virginia Tech
Nov.	9	at Duke
Nov.	16	Navy
Nov.	23	Boston College
Nov.	30	at Stanford

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 12-1

Sept.	1	Michigan	W	24-17
Sept.	8	Ball State	W	24-16
Sept.	15	Vanderbilt	W	22-17
Sept.	22	at Wake Forest	W	56-27
Sept.	29	Stanford	W	38-17
Oct.	6	at Virginia Tech	W	45-23
Oct.	13	Pittsburgh	W	19-14
Oct.	27	vs. Navy #	W	44-22
Nov.	3	at Northwestern	W	31-21
Nov.	10	Florida State	W	42-13
Nov.	17	vs. Syracuse %	W	36-3
Nov.	24	at USC	W	24-17
Dec.	29	vs. Clemson &	L	3-30

#San Diego %Bronx &CFB Playoff Semifinal

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	NATIONAL
Scoring	31.4 ppg	42
Rushing	182.6 ypg	51
Passing	257.5 ypg	37
Total	440.1 ypg	32
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	18.2 ppg	13
Rushing	139.5 ypg	36
Passing	207.9 ypg	44
Total	347.4 ypg	30
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**NATIONAL**
+4	+0.31	41

2019 RECRUITS

1. Kyle Hamilton, S, Atlanta, GA
2. Zeke Correll, C, Cincinnati, OH
3. Quinn Carroll, OT, Minneapolis, MN
4. Jacob Lacey, DT, Bowling Green, KY
5. Andrew Kristofic, OT, Gibsonia, PA
6. John Olmstead, OT, North Brunswick, NJ
7. Isaiah Rutherford, CB, Sacramento, CA
8. Isaiah Foskey, DE, Antioch, CA
9. Osita Ekwonu, LB, Charlotte, NC
10. Litchfield Ajavon, S, Baltimore, VA
11. KJ Wallace, CB, Atlanta, GA
12. NaNa Osafo-Mensah, DE, Fort Worth, TX
13. Hunter Spears, DT, Garland, TX
14. Howard Cross, DE, Paramus, NJ
15. JD Bertrand, Roswell, GA
16. Kyren Williams, RB, St. Louis, MO
17. Jack Kiser, LB, Royal Center, IN
18. Marist Liufau, LB, Kalihi, HI
19. Brendon Clark, QB, Midlothian, VA
20. Kendall Abdur-Rahman, WR, Edwardsville, IL
21. Cam Hart, WR, Baltimore, MD
22. Jay Bramblett, P, Tuscaloosa, AL

Recruits ranked according to the 247SportsComposite

Walter G. Arce Sr.

ADVANCED STATS

5 Factors: College Football's Most Important Stats

Field Position[1]		Rank
Offense	30.4	50
Defense	27.9	30
Margin	**+2.5**	**38**

Efficiency[2]		Rank
Offense	43.1%	55
Defense	37.7%	25
Margin	**+5.4%**	**32**

Explosiveness[3]		Rank
Offense	6.0	48
Defense	4.7	14
Margin	**+1.3**	**16**

Finishing Drives[4]		Rank
Offense	4.8	51
Defense	3.3	5
Margin	**+1.5**	**7**

Adjusted TO Margin[5]		Rank
Projected	6.2	15
Actual	4	40
Margin	**-2.2**	**86**

KEY: 1-Average starting field position by yard line; **2**-Rate of successful plays (gaining 50% of necessary yards on 1st down, 70% on 2nd down, 100% on 3rd down); **3**-Explosiveness=yards per play; **4**-Points per trip inside 40-yard line; **5**-TO margin accounting for "luck" • Advanced stats provided by Bill Connelly of SB Nation

NUMBERS TO KNOW

7

Brian Kelly started his Notre Dame tenure going 2–5 in one-possession games. Then he went 13–1, then 5–6, then 3–9. But he's on another roll now — the Irish have won seven tight games in a row. How long until the next downturn?

+4.8

Where did Notre Dame improve the most during its ascent back into the AP top 10? Field position. The Irish flipped their field position margin by 4.8 yards per drive — 2.4 on offense and 2.4 on defense. That was the 15th-best improvement in the country.

3.3/1.3

The Irish defense remains among the best at big-play prevention. Opponents averaged just 3.3 gains per game of 20-plus yards (13th overall) and 1.3 of 30-plus (11th).

The strength of Notre Dame's 2019 defense is its bevy of pass-rushing defensive ends, led by seniors Julian Okwara, Khalid Kareem and Daelin Hayes, as well as at least two others who could start on most Power 5 conference teams.

Depth at tackle is a concern, but Kurt Hinish and Jacob Lacey at the nose and Myron Tagovailoa-Amosa and Jayson Ademilola at three-technique give the Irish an interior unit with run-stopping abilities.

The linebackers are very young and inexperienced except for fifth-year senior Asmar Bilal, who moves from outside to inside linebacker.

The back-end duo of Gilman and Elliott has a chance to be one of the nation's better sets of safeties. Pride needs a running mate at cornerback. The Irish also need fifth-year senior Shaun Crawford to re-emerge at nickel after he suffered his third season-ending injury in '18.

SPECIALISTS The losses at placekicker and punter are acute. Justin Yoon was the picture of consistency as Notre Dame's kicker from 2015-18, while booming punter Tyler Newsome was a great athlete with the clutch gene. Junior placekicker Jonathan Doerer was inconsistent throughout the spring, while early entry freshman Jay Bramblett is the only real option at punter. Finke is a veteran, sure-handed, darting punt returner (9.8-yard average). Young had a 48-yard kick return last year, but he averaged just 21.2 for his nine attempts.

FINAL ANALYSIS Kelly has settled in as Notre Dame's head coach in his 10th season with the Irish. The 4–8 season of 2016 is a distant memory as the Irish have won 22 of their last 26 games. He's relaxed. He's in control. He has two young, exciting coordinators, and he's established a consistently productive recruiting approach.

Considerable talent walked out the door following the 2018 season. The last time the Irish lost this much talent was after the 10-win season of 2015, and Notre Dame promptly lost two-thirds of its games. But the Irish have way more going for them in '19 than the hand Kelly was dealt three years ago.

Another Playoff berth likely depends upon three road trips — Georgia, Michigan and Stanford in the regular-season finale.

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (8)

WR	**83**	**Chase Claypool (Sr.)**	4	Kevin Austin Jr. (So.)
WR	87	Michael Young (Jr.)	18	Joe Wilkins (So.)
WR	**10**	**Chris Finke (Sr.)**	13	Lawrence Keys III (So.)
LT	**74**	**Liam Eichenberg (Sr.)**	60	Cole Mabry (So.)
LG	**69**	**Aaron Banks (Jr.)**	75	Josh Lugg (Jr.)
C	55	Jarrett Patterson (So.)	75	Josh Lugg (Jr.)
RG	**78**	**Tommy Kraemer (Sr.)**	56	John Dirksen (So.)
RT	**72**	**Robert Hainsey (Jr.)**	77	Quinn Carroll (Fr.)
TE	**84**	**Cole Kmet (Jr.)**	89	Brock Wright (Jr.)
QB	**12**	**Ian Book (Sr.)**	15	Phil Jurkovec (So.)
RB	8	Jafar Armstrong (Jr.)	6	Tony Jones Jr. (Jr.)

DEFENSE (6)

Returning Starters in Bold

DE	**53**	**Khalid Kareem (Sr.)**	91	Ade Ogundeji (Sr.)
DT	95	Myron Tagovailoa-Amosa (Jr.)	57	Jayson Ademilola (So.)
NT	41	Kurt Hinish (Jr.)	54	Jacob Lacey (Fr.)
DE	**42**	**Julian Okwara (Sr.)**	9	Daelin Hayes (Sr.)
MLB	**22**	**Asmar Bilal (Sr.)**	33	Shayne Simon (So.)
WLB	31	Jack Lamb (So.)	2	Jordan Genmark Heath (Jr.)
ROV	30	Jeremiah Owusu-Koramoah (Jr.)	13	Paul Moala (So.)
CB	**5**	**Troy Pride Jr. (Sr.)**	20	Shaun Crawford (Sr.)
CB	3	Houston Griffith (So.)	4	Avery Davis (Jr.)
SS	**21**	**Jalen Elliott (Sr.)**	7	Derrik Allen (So.)
FS	**11**	**Alohi Gilman (Jr.)**	12	DJ Brown (So.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	39	Jonathan Doerer (Jr.)	**KR**	10	Chris Finke (Sr.)
P	19	Jay Bramblett (Fr.)	**PR**	87	Michael Young (Jr.)

2018 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Ian Book	**314**	**214**	**2,628**	**19**	**7**
Brandon Wimbush	102	54	719	4	6

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD
Dexter Williams	158	995	6.3	12
Tony Jones Jr.	**83**	**392**	**4.7**	**3**
Jafar Armstrong	**72**	**383**	**5.3**	**7**
Ian Book	**95**	**280**	**2.9**	**4**

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	TD
Miles Boykin	59	872	14.8	8
Chase Claypool	**50**	**639**	**12.8**	**4**
Chris Finke	**49**	**571**	**11.7**	**2**
Alizé Mack	36	360	10.0	3

KICKING: Justin Yoon, 17-21 FGs, 92 pts.
TACKLES: Te'von Coney, 123; **Alohi Gilman, 95**
SACKS: **Julian Okwara, 8.0**; Jerry Tillery, 8.0
INTERCEPTIONS: Jalen Elliott, 4

Returning Players in **Bold**

SCOUTING THE FIGHTING IRISH

OPPOSING COACHES SIZE UP NOTRE DAME

"Last year's team was by far the best of Brian Kelly's time in South Bend. They're athletic all over again, and the entire team identity was redefined by Ian Book. They changed over coaches and schemes, but it's really all about that quarterback. For the first time, they could be lethal in both the run and the pass from that position. As long as he stays healthy and builds on his passing, they will be a Playoff contender again this season. … There's plenty of talent behind what they're losing at wide receiver and tight end. They have a really solid and dynamic group of running backs, and if they can replace the inside offensive line guys who graduated, they'll be just as good running the ball. … The second reason for their turnaround is that they've got freak defensive ends, guys who can really disrupt. All of their best guys there are coming back. … Their schedule ended up being a little lighter last year, but they're going to have a gut check with Georgia early on. In hindsight there's no shame in losing to Clemson like that; the trick is to try and close that gap against the elite SEC country teams that give them so many problems with defensive speed. … Brian Kelly really found a second life with the new coaching staff. It was touch and go there for a while. The scheme didn't seem drastically different; it was all execution."

Army Black Knights

National Forecast: **44** • Projected Record: **11-2**

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	30	Rice
Sept.	7	at Michigan
Sept.	14	at UTSA
Sept.	21	Morgan State
Oct.	5	Tulane
Oct.	12	at Western Kentucky
Oct.	19	at Georgia State
Oct.	26	San Jose State
Nov.	2	at Air Force
Nov.	9	Massachusetts
Nov.	16	VMI
Nov.	30	at Hawaii
Dec.	14	vs. Navy #

#Philadelphia

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 11-2

Aug.	31	at Duke	L	14-34
Sept.	8	Liberty	W	38-14
Sept.	15	Hawaii	W	28-21
Sept.	22	at Oklahoma (ot)	L	21-28
Sept.	29	at Buffalo	W	42-13
Oct.	13	vs. San Jose State #	W	52-3
Oct.	20	Miami (Ohio) (ot)	W	31-30
Oct.	27	at Eastern Michigan	W	37-22
Nov.	3	Air Force	W	17-14
Nov.	10	Lafayette	W	31-13
Nov.	17	Colgate	W	28-14
Dec.	8	vs. Navy %	W	17-10
Dec.	22	vs. Houston &	W	70-14

#Santa Clara %Philadelphia &Armed Forces Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Simon Dellinger, TE, Fort Wayne, IN
2. Joshua Doyle, CB, Valencia, CA
3. Anthony Adkins, ATH, Hodgenville, KY
4. Fabrice Voyne, S, Palm Desert, CA
5. Trenton Waggoner, WR, Houston, TX
6. Gerald Irons, DT, Spring, TX
7. Jonzell Prudhomme, LB, Houston, TX
8. Dedrick Wilson, ATH, Kenedy, TX
9. Keiran Grant, RB, Cuero, TX
10. Jabari Moore, DB, Hoover, TX

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	NATIONAL
Scoring	32.8 ppg	35
Rushing	312.5 ypg	2
Passing	80.1 ypg	128
Total	392.5 ypg	77
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	17.7 ppg	10
Rushing	106.8 ypg	10
Passing	188.8 ypg	21
Total	295.5 ypg	8
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**NATIONAL**
+10	+0.77	11

STAT CORNER

5.4

Army averaged 5.4 yards to go on third down, and opponents averaged 8.4 to go. Both of those averages ranked first in FBS.

OFFENSE After doing an admirable job in backing up Ahmad Bradshaw in 2017, Kelvin Hopkins Jr. took over at quarterback last season and became the first player in Army history to exceed 1,000 yards both rushing and passing in a single season. Now a senior, Hopkins returns to lead an option attack that last year was second nationally with 312.5 yards per game on the ground. Though Darnell Woolfolk and Andy Davidson have graduated, there are a few experienced returning ball carriers, led by running back Kell Walker and fullback Connor Slomka, both seniors.

A major void needs to be filled on the line with the departure of center Bryce Holland, who anchored the unit past three years. Jack Sides, a backup at guard last season, saw time with the first string at center during spring practice.

Senior Kjetil Cline and junior Cam Harrison are returning starting receivers.

DEFENSE The Black Knights were in the top 10 nationally in many major categories last season, including forced fumbles (13, tied for fifth), total defense (295.5 ypg, eighth), and points allowed (17.7 ppg, 10th). A veteran secondary that returns three starters is led by corner Elijah Riley. The senior broke up 10 passes last season and was second among returning players with 7.5 tackles for a loss. Senior safety Jaylon McClinton, who had a career-high nine tackles against Navy, has been a key contributor to the defense's success the past three years.

Led by Alex Aukerman and James Nachtigal, the play at linebacker has been dominant at times the past couple of seasons. Now, it is senior Cole Christiansen's turn to lead the group. Last year, he led the team in TFLs with 12.5 and is the leading returning tackler within a front seven that needs a couple of new starters to emerge.

SPECIALISTS A new placekicker and punter are needed and may not be identified until fall camp. Landon Salyers handled kickoffs last season and could assume placekicking duties. Zach Potter is the only experienced punter on the roster. Last season, Army averaged only 12.7 yards per kick return, last in the nation. Walker and Sandon McCoy split duties, which they may do again.

FINAL ANALYSIS Coach Jeff Monken has taken the Black Knights to extraordinary heights. Army won 29 games the past three seasons, the most in any three-year period at the academy. Back-to-back double-digit win seasons and three successive bowl appearances, all wins, were also unprecedented achievements. What people talk about most, though, are three straight wins over Navy and winning the Commander-In-Chief's Trophy in consecutive years for the first time. Not that Monken will take any credit for it. "I'm here to serve our players," he said after last year's win against the Midshipmen. "That's my job, to serve them. I want their experience as players at Army to be the greatest experience of their life."

Though a few seniors who played significant roles in the aforementioned success have departed, there is plenty of starting experience and a level of depth that Monken has built through recruiting. Another 10-plus-win season is not out of the question. After Army took Oklahoma to overtime last year, be sure to circle Sept. 7, when the Black Knights travel to Ann Arbor to face Michigan.

Kelvin Hopkins Jr.

"An amazing job by Jeff Monken to turn that team into the class of the service academies and a damn good team against anybody."

— An opposing assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (7) — Returning Starters in Bold

WR	**82**	**Kjetil Cline (Sr.)**	6	Glen Coates (Sr.)
WR	**88**	**Cam Harrison (Jr.)**	86	Christian Hayes (Sr.)
LT	60	Alex Herndon (Jr.)	68	Luke McCleery (Jr.)
LG	**73**	**Jaxson Deaton (Sr.)**	77	Noah Utley (Sr.)
C	75	Jack Sides (Sr.)	76	Peyton Reeder (Jr.)
RG	**76**	**Peyton Reeder (Jr.)**	59	Mike Johnson (Jr.)
RT	**55**	**JB Hunter (Jr.)**	64	Will Huff (Sr.)
TE	47	Jake Lauer (Jr.)	83	Zach Saum (Sr.)
QB	**8**	**Kelvin Hopkins Jr. (Sr.)**	2	Tyhier Tyler (Fr.)
RB	**5**	**Kell Walker (Sr.)**	32	Artice Hobbs IV (Jr.)
FB	25	Connor Slomka (Sr.)	34	Rashaad Bolton (Jr.)

DEFENSE (4)

DE	55	Edriece Patterson (Jr.)	18	Jake Ellington (Sr.)
NT	57	Jacob Covington (Sr.)	98	Connor Smith (Jr.)
NG	93	Rod Stoddard (Sr.)	97	Kwabena Bonsu (So.)
OLB	11	Donavan Lynch (Sr.)	43	Jeremiah Lowery (Jr.)
ILB	53	Arik Smith (So.)	31	Joe Stephenson (Jr.)
ILB	**54**	**Cole Christiansen (Sr.)**	15	Ryan Parker (Sr.)
OLB	52	Amadeo West (Sr.)	34	Jack King (Sr.)
CB	**23**	**Elijah Riley (Sr.)**	13	Chris Skyers (Jr.)
CB	**8**	**Javhari Bourdeau (Jr.)**	33	Cedrick Cunningham Jr. (So.)
S	**7**	**Jaylon McClinton (Sr.)**	38	Michael Williams (So.)
S	20	Cameron Jones (Sr.)	5	Ryan Velez (Sr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	1	Landon Salyers (Jr.)	**KR** 5	Kell Walker (Sr.)
P	17	Zach Potter (Sr.)	**PR** 23	Elijah Riley (Sr.)

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Kelvin Hopkins Jr., 93-51-1,026-3, 6 TDs
Rushing: Kelvin Hopkins Jr., 208 att., 1,017 yds., 17 TDs
Receiving: Kell Walker, 11 rec., 170 yds., TD
Tackles: Cole Christiansen, 77
Sacks: Edriece Patterson, 2.0
Interceptions: Jaylon McClinton, 2

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Jeff Monken
Record at School: 35-28 (5 years)
Career Record: 73-44 (9 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Brent Davis
Defensive Coordinator: John Loose
West Point, NY • Michie Stadium (38,000)

Army Athletics

Liberty **Flames**

National Forecast: **110** • Projected Record: **6-6**

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	Syracuse
Sept.	7	at Louisiana
Sept.	14	Buffalo
Sept.	21	Hampton
Sept.	28	New Mexico
Oct.	5	at New Mexico State
Oct.	19	Maine
Oct.	26	at Rutgers
Nov.	2	at Massachusetts
Nov.	9	at BYU
Nov.	23	at Virginia
Nov.	30	New Mexico State

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 6-6

Sept.	1	Old Dominion	W	52-10
Sept.	8	at Army	L	14-38
Sept.	22	North Texas	L	7-47
Sept.	29	at New Mexico	W	52-43
Oct.	6	at New Mexico State	L	41-49
Oct.	13	Troy	W	22-16
Oct.	20	Idaho State	W	48-41
Nov.	3	at UMass (ot)	L	59-62
Nov.	10	at Virginia	L	24-45
Nov.	17	at Auburn	L	0-53
Nov.	24	New Mexico State	W	28-21
Dec.	1	Norfolk State	W	52-17

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Tayvion Land, CB, Virginia Beach, VA
2. Elijah James, DT, Chicago, IL*
3. CJ Yarbrough, WR, Tanner, AL
4. Brayden Monday, DE, Waynesville, NC
5. Emanuel Dabney, CB, Jackson, MS*
6. Malik Caper, LB, Dallas, TX
7. Johnathan Bennett, QB, Summerville, SC
8. William Green, DT, Albany, GA*
9. Maisen Knight, OT, Salt Lake City, UT*
10. Micaiah Overton, TE, Fort Worth, TX

*junior college transfer

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	NATIONAL
Scoring	33.3 ppg	34
Rushing	161.4 ypg	75
Passing	261.5 ypg	33
Total	422.9 ypg	46
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	36.8 ppg	117
Rushing	221.8 ypg	117
Passing	262.9 ypg	113
Total	484.8 ypg	123
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**NATIONAL**
-2	-0.17	83

STAT CORNER

33.3

Liberty took on an FBS schedule for the first time, and the offense actually improved from 32.5 points per game to 33.3.

OFFENSE With new coach Hugh Freeze installing his system, speed is at a premium for the Flames. They averaged more than 77 plays per game in 2018, and that number should increase significantly this season.

Quarterback Stephen "Buckshot" Calvert enters his senior season coming off a 21-touchdown, 18-interception campaign, and new offensive coordinator/QB coach Kent Austin worked tirelessly during the offseason to get Calvert more comfortable, accurate and in tune with the timing of the offense.

Calvert's favorite target is senior Antonio Gandy-Golden, who reached 1,000 receiving yards and 10 touchdowns for the second straight season. Noah Frith emerged during the offseason with his sure hands and ability to get behind the secondary. Slot receivers Damian King and DJ Stubbs are back and provide electric plays in the middle of the field.

Running back Frankie Hickson enjoyed a breakout season with 1,032 yards and 11 touchdowns, and he's back to full health after undergoing left knee surgery in the offseason. The backfield is deeper this season with Peytton Pickett and Joshua Mack as backs who are more than capable of being every-down options.

The offensive line returns three starters, highlighted by Dontae Duff at right guard and Thomas Sargeant at center. Tristan Schultz moves over to left tackle after the graduation of Julio Lozano.

DEFENSE New defensive coordinator Scott Symons' goal is to quickly address deficiencies with his 4-2-5 scheme. Symons was successful as a coordinator at Division II West Georgia and spent the previous season as inside linebackers coach at Memphis.

Symons has a good starting point with a defensive line that features Jessie Lemonier and Austin Lewis at defensive ends, and three interior linemen with experience in Vincent Elefante, Ralfs Rusins and Devin Pearson. The group also added needed depth (and size) in the offseason with junior college transfers Elijah James, William Green and Devonte Lloyd. Those three are expected to play immediately.

The linebacker corps returns Brandon Tillmon, Solomon Ajayi and Remington Green, and Lucas Irons returns after not playing last season because of an injury. Two younger players — Amarii Jenkins and Aaron Pierre — also figure to be in the rotation with their emergence during the offseason.

The secondary took a step forward last season and returns three starters in cornerback Bejour Wilson, free safety Isaac Steele and strong safety Elijah Benton. Steele and Benton were among the leading tacklers and provided veteran leadership in the back end. Junior college transfer Emanuel Dabney quickly asserted his presence in the spring at cornerback.

SPECIALISTS Kicker Alex Probert was granted a medical redshirt and returns with two seasons of eligibility remaining. If there are lingering effects with his right quad, freshman Jason Stricker should step in after the Flames had to turn to two walk-ons last season to fill in while Probert was recovering from the injury.

FINAL ANALYSIS Freeze returns to the sidelines after a two-year hiatus and has brought excitement as Liberty enters its first season as a full-fledged FBS member. With Calvert at quarterback providing veteran leadership, Liberty should pick up the offense, put together six wins and be eligible for a bowl game.

Buckshot Calvert

"They're recruiting really well, but they're still not an FBS team in terms of depth. I don't think the defense will hold up at all."

— An opposing assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (6)				Returning Starters in Bold
WR	11	**Antonio Gandy-Golden (Sr.)**	2	Kevin Shaa (Jr.)
WR	81	Noah Frith (Fr.)	1	Shedro Louis (Fr.)
WR	7	Damian King (Sr.)	5	DJ Stubbs (Jr.)
LT	68	**Tristan Schultz (Jr.)**		Maisen Knight (Jr.)
LG	66	Ethan Crawford (Sr.)	64	Jacob Bodden (Fr.)
C	65	**Thomas Sargeant (Jr.)**	79	John Kourtis (Fr.)
RG	56	**Dontae Duff (Sr.)**	55	Brendan Schlittler (Fr.)
RT	73	Sam Isaacson (Sr.)	77	Cooper McCaw (So.)
TE	15	Chris Barrett (Jr.)	3	Johnny Huntley (Jr.)
QB	12	**Buckshot Calvert (Sr.)**	6	Johnathan Bennett (Fr.)
RB	23	**Frankie Hickson (Sr.)**	34	Joshua Mack (Jr.)
DEFENSE (7)				
DE	11	**Jessie Lemonier (Sr.)**	15	Jayod Sanders (Jr.)
DT	94	Vincent Elefante (Sr.)		Elijah James (Jr.)
NG	99	Ralfs Rusins (Jr.)	34	**Devin Pearson (Sr.)**
DE	44	Austin Lewis (So.)	58	Thaddius Watson (Jr.)
MLB	14	**Solomon Ajayi (Sr.)**	5	Lucas Irons (Sr.)
WLB	12	**Brandon Tillmon (Sr.)**	47	Remington Green (Jr.)
ROV	6	Ceneca Espinoza Jr. (Jr.)	21	Marcellous Harris (Fr.)
CB	2	Emanuel Dabney (Jr.)	24	Malik Matthews (Sr.)
CB	20	**Bejour Wilson (Sr.)**	8	Jimmy Faulks (Jr.)
FS	13	**Isaac Steele (Jr.)**	1	JaVon Scruggs (So.)
SS	31	**Elijah Benton (Sr.)**	3	Rion Davis (Sr.)
SPECIAL TEAMS				
K	10	Alex Probert (Jr.)	KR 1	Shedro Louis (Fr.)
P	13	Aidan Alves (So.)	PR 21	Treon Sibley (Fr.)

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Buckshot Calvert, 439-240-3,068-18, 21 TDs
Rushing: Frankie Hickson, 229 att., 1,032 yds., 11 TDs
Receiving: Antonio Gandy-Golden, 71 rec., 1,037 yds., 10 TDs
Tackles: Solomon Ajayi, Elijah Benton, 76
Sacks: Jessie Lemonier, 10.0
Interceptions: Isaac Steele, Bejour Wilson, 3

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Hugh Freeze
Record at School: First Season
Career Record: 69-32 (8 years)
Offensive Coordinators: Kent Austin, Maurice Harris
Defensive Coordinator: Scott Symons
Lynchburg, VA • Williams Stadium (25,000)

Joel Coleman/Liberty Athletics

New Mexico State **Aggies**

National Forecast: **127** • Projected Record: **3-9**

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	at Washington State
Sept.	7	at Alabama
Sept.	14	San Diego State
Sept.	21	at New Mexico
Sept.	28	Fresno State
Oct.	5	Liberty
Oct.	12	at Central Michigan
Oct.	26	at Georgia Southern
Nov.	9	at Ole Miss
Nov.	16	Incarnate Word
Nov.	23	UTEP
Nov.	30	at Liberty

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 3-9

Aug.	25	Wyoming	L	7-29
Aug.	30	at Minnesota	L	10-48
Sept.	8	at Utah State	L	13-60
Sept.	15	New Mexico	L	25-42
Sept.	22	at UTEP	W	27-20
Oct.	6	Liberty	W	49-41
Oct.	13	at Louisiana	L	38-66
Oct.	20	Georgia Southern	L	31-48
Oct.	27	at Texas State	L	20-27
Nov.	3	Alcorn State	W	52-42
Nov.	17	at BYU	L	10-45
Nov.	24	at Liberty	L	21-28

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Brandon Shivers, CB, Scottsdale, AZ
2. Weston Eget, QB, Stevenson Ranch, CA
3. Tevan McAdams, DL, Denton, TX*
4. Lama Lavea, DT, El Paso, TX
5. Jomaious Williams, DT, Wilmington, NC*
6. Carson Pharris, OT, San Antonio, TX
7. Jason Simmons, S, Lancaster, TX
8. Michael Bowe, LB, Plantation, FL*
9. Luteru Fedler, OG, Murrieta, CA
10. Jared Wyatt, WR, Wylie, TX*

*junior college transfer

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	NATIONAL
Scoring	25.3 ppg	95
Rushing	105.3 ypg	125
Passing	265.2 ypg	30
Total	370.5 ypg	97
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	41.3 ppg	126
Rushing	268.4 ypg	125
Passing	207.5 ypg	43
Total	475.9 ypg	120
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**NATIONAL**
-8	-0.67	115

STAT CORNER

20.3

NMSU carved out a high-tempo identity in 2018, averaging one play every 20.3 seconds (third). Now to create more GOOD plays.

OFFENSE Offense has been the calling card for New Mexico State under seventh-year coach Doug Martin, but losing key pieces from a unit that finished No. 28 in total offense in 2017 proved too much for the Aggies to overcome last fall. New Mexico State dropped to No. 97 in total offense, averaging 370.5 yards per game.

One bright spot was the emergence of quarterback Josh Adkins. Adkins replaced Matthew Romero in the starting lineup against UTEP and promptly won his first two starts after an 0–4 start. Adkins finished his redshirt freshman season completing 56.5 percent of his passes for 2,563 yards with 13 TDs and nine interceptions.

With Adkins firmly in the QB1 role, the Aggies have nine returning players with starting experience, including three seniors along the offensive line.

New Mexico State's best offensive player is running back Jason Huntley, who rushed for 505 yards on 4.6 yards per carry and was also the team's third-leading receiver with 47 receptions for 529 yards and three scores. Christian Gibson provides a more physical option at running back.

Senior OJ Clark had 52 receptions last year, and Martin has also added three junior college receivers, along with Baylor graduate transfer Tony Nicholson.

DEFENSE New Mexico State's defensive unit was the biggest surprise in 2018. The Aggies took a huge step back last season. After finishing No. 74 in total defense in 2017 with 43 quarterback sacks, the Aggies ranked No. 120 last season with 28 sacks.

There are significant holes to fill at the linebacker and secondary positions. Fourth-year defensive coordinator Frank Spaziani addressed those positions through recruiting, signing three junior college linebackers and secondary players.

The strongest unit on the defense is the line, with four players returning with starting experience. The linebacker corps will be anchored by senior Javahn Fergurson, who led the country last season with 13.2 tackles per game.

Playmaker Shamad Lomax moved back to boundary corner after a one-year experiment at safety, and senior Ray Buford Jr. will start at field corner, but both safety positions will be manned by newcomers.

If the Aggies are to take a step back toward respectability on defense, they will have to provide more resistance in the run game. New Mexico State allowed 268.4 yards per game and 5.1 yards per carry.

SPECIALISTS Huntley was one of the nation's top kickoff returners, averaging 27 yards on his 22 returns, with three TDs. Dylan Brown is back to handle placekicking duties after converting 10-of-15 field goals last season. Punter Payton Theisler averaged 40.7 yards per kick last year.

FINAL ANALYSIS The Aggies had a rough first year as an independent, and the schedule in their second year is extremely difficult with back-to-back road games at Washington State and Alabama and a home game against San Diego State to open the season. They also play at Ole Miss and host Fresno State.

Martin's offense has proven capable of moving the football and scoring points. But if New Mexico State doesn't improve on the defensive side of the ball and provide Adkins with protection, it will be another long year in Las Cruces.

Josh Adkins

"Doug Martin has worked really hard to get some good Texas players in that program, but they're never going to be able to build consistency."

— An opposing assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (7)					Returning Starters in Bold
WR		Robert Downs III (Jr.)		Terrell Warner (So.)
WR		Tony Nicholson (Sr.)	**9**	**Drew Dan (Sr.)**
WR	**2**	**OJ Clark (Sr.)**	10	Izaiah Lottie (Sr.)
WR	6	Andre Bodison (Jr.)	4	Caleb Mills (Jr.)
LT	**76**	**Sage Doxtater (Sr.)**	75	Evan Tafoya-Vallo (So.)
LG	54	Isaiah Mursalat (Fr.)		Luteru Fedler (Fr.)
C	**78**	**Brian Trujillo (Sr.)**	71	Max Wilhite (Fr.)
RG	**65**	**Tony Bello (Sr.)**	50	Austin Young (Fr.)
RT		Blake Walker (Jr.)	52	Jalen Guerrero (Jr.)
QB	**14**	**Josh Adkins (So.)**	5	Cameron Matthews (So.)
RB	**1**	**Jason Huntley (Sr.)**	25	Christian Gibson (Sr.)
DEFENSE (6)				
DE	**28**	**Shane Jackson (Sr.)**	31	Mike Edwards (So.)
DT	**51**	**Roy Lopez (Sr.)**	48	Marcus Buckley (So.)
NT	99	Myles Vigne (Jr.)		Jomaious Williams (Jr.)
DE	**10**	**Cedric Wilcots II (Sr.)**	88	Xander Yarberough (Jr.)
WLB	47	Devin Richardson (So.)		Joshua Fergurson (Fr.)
MLB	**7**	**Javahn Fergurson (Sr.)**	80	Trevor Brohard (So.)
SLB	20	Jonathan Hood (Sr.)		Rashie Hodge Jr. (Jr.)
CB	**1**	**Ray Buford Jr. (Sr.)**	29	Jared Phipps (Sr.)
CB	**22**	**Shamad Lomax (Sr.)**	5	Komotay Koffie (Sr.)
SS		Chance Cook (Jr.)	21	Rodney McGraw II (So.)
FS	19	Austin Perkins (Sr.)		Christopher Bell (Jr.)
SPECIAL TEAMS				
K	18	Dylan Brown (Sr.)	**KR** 1	Jason Huntley (Sr.)
P	16	Payton Theisler (Sr.)	**PR** 2	OJ Clark (Sr.)

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Josh Adkins, 393-222-2,563-9, 13 TDs
Rushing: Christian Gibson, 96 att., 590 yds., 6 TDs
Receiving: OJ Clark, 52 rec., 512 yds., 1 TD
Tackles: Javahn Fergurson, 132
Sacks: Cedric Wilcots II, 7.0
Interceptions: 4 players tied with 1

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Doug Martin
Record at School: 20-53 (6 years)
Career Record: 49-106 (13 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Doug Martin
Defensive Coordinator: Frank Spaziani
Las Cruces, NM • Aggie Memorial Stadium (28,853)

Polo Ortiz

UMass **Minutemen**

National Forecast: **129** • Projected Record: **2-10**

2019 SCHEDULE

Aug.	30	at Rutgers
Sept.	7	Southern Illinois
Sept.	14	at Charlotte
Sept.	21	Coastal Carolina
Sept.	28	Akron
Oct.	5	at FIU
Oct.	12	at Louisiana Tech
Oct.	26	Connecticut
Nov.	2	Liberty
Nov.	9	at Army
Nov.	16	at Northwestern
Nov.	23	BYU

2018 RESULTS

RECORD: 4-8

Aug.	25	Duquesne	W	63-15
Sept.	1	at Boston College	L	21-55
Sept.	8	at Georgia Southern	L	13-34
Sept.	15	at FIU	L	24-63
Sept.	22	Charlotte	W	49-31
Sept.	29	at Ohio	L	42-58
Oct.	6	South Florida	L	42-58
Oct.	20	Coastal Carolina	L	13-24
Oct.	27	at Connecticut	W	22-17
Nov.	3	Liberty (ot)	W	62-59
Nov.	10	vs. BYU #	L	16-35
Nov.	17	at Georgia	L	27-66

#Foxboro

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Josh Wallace, CB, Hyattsville, MD
2. Xavier Graham, OG, Niceville, FL
3. Malik Sanders, CB, Greenville, MS*
4. Jermaine Johnson, WR, Hyattsville, MD
5. Taj Jones, WR, Patterson, NJ
6. Bryce Wade, OT, Albuquerque, NM*
7. Javon Turner, WR, Newark, NJ*
8. Logan Darby, S, Bentonville, AR*
9. Cletus Mathurin, DT, Hartford, CT
10. Andrew Brito, QB, Paramus, NJ*

*junior college transfer

2018 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	NATIONAL
Scoring	32.8 ppg	35
Rushing	139.5 ypg	103
Passing	298.1 ypg	14
Total	437.6 ypg	34
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	42.9 ppg	127
Rushing	274.5 ypg	126
Passing	210.0 ypg	47
Total	484.8 ypg	123
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**NATIONAL**
-4	-0.33	91

STAT CORNER

7.2

Both UMass and opponents dominated first downs: UMass averaged 7.2 yards per play (eighth in FBS) and allowed 7.0 (119th).

OFFENSE The Minutemen lost their top passer, top receiver and top rusher from 2018, so new coach Walt Bell will be installing a new spread offense with lots of new faces.

Junior college transfer quarterback Andrew Brito won't arrive until the summer, but if he can pick up the offense quickly, he's expected to be the starter.

Running back Bilal Ally, who'd fallen out of former coach Mark Whipple's rotation last year, had planned to transfer, but he decided to stay when Bell was hired and is slated to start entering the year. True freshman Kevin Brown, who enrolled in January and participated in spring football, could push for No. 1 back status quickly.

NFL-bound Andy Isabella will be a huge loss at receiver. Sophomores Samuel Emilus and Zak Simon should be instant contributors. Jessie Britt, who, like Ally, was headed elsewhere without a coaching change, enters the year as the No. 1 slot receiver and could be part of a Brito-to-Britt tongue-twister. Senior Sadiq Palmer, the top returning receiver (28 catches for 419 yard), and junior Brennon Dingle should be in the mix as well. Junior college transfer receiver Javon Turner, who played with Brito in high school, will have a chance to crack the rotation.

Tight ends Kyle Horn and Taylor Edwards will be more valuable as blockers than receiving targets.

On the offensive line, Ray Thomas-Ishman Sr. moves from left tackle to left guard and Larnel Coleman moves from right tackle to left tackle to give the Minutemen an experienced left side. Michael Sullivan could start at right tackle.

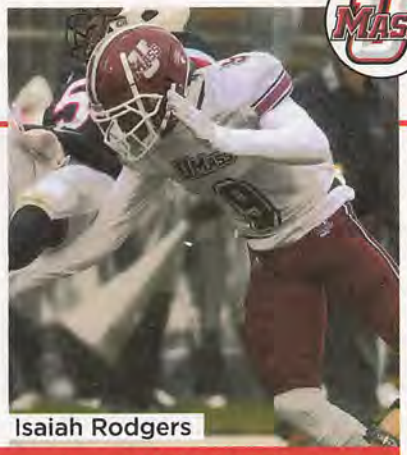
DEFENSE Linebacker might be the defense's strongest unit despite the graduation of tackling machine Bryton Barr. Junior Chinedu Ogbonna is the team's top returning tackler from a year ago. He'll be joined by Penn State graduate transfer Jarvis Miller, who was a reserve for the Nittany Lions but is expected to make an impact in one season in Amherst.

The defensive line is a question mark as the Minutemen are short on bodies and experience. Jake Byczko is the veteran at end. He had 3.5 sacks and 55 tackles in 2018.

Senior Isaiah Rodgers is the team's top cover corner and figures to lead the secondary. He has seven career interceptions, including two last year. He could land on some NFL radars with a strong senior season. Promising redshirt freshman Donte Lindsey will man the other spot. Junior college transfer Logan Darby joins Joseph Norwood as starters at safety.

SPECIALISTS Cooper Garcia returns as the starter on field goals, extra points and kickoffs after a solid season last year. George Georgopoulos, who averaged 39.2 yards per punt as a freshman, will resume the No. 1 punting role. Emilus will start the year as the No. 1 kick returner, while Rodgers could see time there and on punt returns as well.

FINAL ANALYSIS It figures to be a tough year, as the first-time head coach inherits a team that lost quite a few skill position players from a team that struggled through a 4–8 record last year. Bell is hoping that some junior college transfers will make his first year a little smoother, but the former Florida State offensive coordinator is likely looking at a rocky season against a schedule that includes Big Ten opponents Northwestern and Rutgers, as well as BYU.



Isaiah Rodgers

"It's maybe one of the hardest jobs in the country. (Walt) Bell has to come out and show some kind of plan right away; otherwise, it could be ugly."

— An opposing assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (3)				Returning Starters in Bold
WR	11	Zak Simon (So.)		Javon Turner (Jr.)
WR	81	Samuel Emilus (So.)	6	Sadiq Palmer (Sr.)
WR	5	Jessie Britt (Jr.)	**4**	**Brennon Dingle (Jr.)**
LT	**59**	**Larnel Coleman (Jr.)**	77	Brian Abosi (So.)
LG	**57**	**Ray Thomas-Ishman Sr. (Sr.)**		Helber Fagundes (Fr.)
C	76	Jaylen Larry (So.)	53	Parker Ogle (Fr.)
RG	50	Mike Yerardi (Sr.)		Xavier Graham (Fr.)
RT	78	Michael Sullivan (Fr.)		Bryce Wade (Jr.)
TE	85	Kyle Horn (Sr.)	18	Taylor Edwards (Jr.)
QB		Andrew Brito (Jr.)	17	Michael Curtis (Sr.)
RB	22	Bilal Ally (Sr.)		Kevin Brown (Fr.)
DEFENSE (3)				
DE	**97**	**Jake Byczko (Jr.)**	60	Timothy Moulton (Fr.)
NT	99	Dennis Osagiede (So.)	73	Chris DiTomasso (So.)
DT	94	Charly Timite (Jr.)		Cletus Mathurin (Fr.)
DL	35	Shannon Junior II (Fr.)	21	Tyshaun Ingram (Sr.)
MLB	**17**	**Chinedu Ogbonna (Jr.)**	20	Claudin Cherrelus (So.)
WLB		Jarvis Miller (Sr.)	46	Cole McCubrey (Jr.)
NB	13	James Bowe Jr. (Sr.)	18	Xavier Steele (Jr.)
CB	**9**	**Isaiah Rodgers (Sr.)**	28	Justin Lewis (So.)
CB	10	Donte Lindsey (Fr.)	45	Bakhari Goodson (Sr.)
S	7	Joseph Norwood (So.)	29	Martin Mangram (Sr.)
S		Logan Darby (Jr.)	29	Martin Mangram (Sr.)
SPECIAL TEAMS				
K	37	Cooper Garcia (Sr.)	**KR** 81	Samuel Emilus (So.)
P	88	George Georgopoulos (So.)	**PR** 9	Isaiah Rodgers (Sr.)

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Michael Curtis, 40-26-412-2, 4 TDs
Rushing: Bilal Ally, 25 att., 139 yds., 1 TD
Receiving: Sadiq Palmer, 28 rec., 419 yds., 2 TDs
Tackles: Chinedu Ogbonna, 72
Sacks: Jake Byczko, 3.5
Interceptions: Isaiah Rodgers, 2

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Walt Bell
Record at School: First Season
Career Record: First Season
Offensive Coordinator: Walt Bell
Defensive Coordinators: Aazaar Abdul-Rahim, Tommy Restivo
Amherst, MA • McGuirk Alumni Stadium (17,000)

UMass Athletics

College Football

Betting Guide

By Bet the Board Staff

Betting on college football is a world unto itself. There are 130 FBS teams, and each carries more than 90 players, making the challenges instantly more difficult than the NFL for handicappers committed to their craft. But the money won and lost is just as green on South Alabama as it is on Alabama or Clemson. From single-game wagering to futures to win totals and beyond, here's a quick cheat sheet to get you ready for a productive season of betting college football.

Charlie Brewer

The Basics:

1. Do not get overwhelmed. Remember, there are 130 teams and more than 60-plus lined games every week. Your job is to find the areas of the market where you can level the playing field with the oddsmakers, deep diving Texas State vs. UMass with the same vigor as the week's top SEC game.

2. Know the move, but don't follow it blindly. Given the increased popularity and perception of sports wagering, line movement has become a more prevalent conversation topic. Trust yourself. Keep in mind — the best professional handicappers aim to hit 54 percent or higher, which means they're wrong a lot. Respect the line movement, but trust the research you've done.

3. Don't wait until five minutes before kickoff to get your bets in. When you're investing in 18- to 22-year-old young men, a lot can change from Sunday to Saturday. But understand that finding value is only half the battle. Our favorite offshore site, BetOnline.ag, leads the market in openers on Sundays, and the market starts moving immediately. Know which lines you want and be ready to fire.

4. Always remember: Throughout the entire season, teams are never as bad or as good as they looked the week before. Don't overreact to abnormally slow starts with power programs or fast starts for mid-majors, but instead remember that water ultimately finds its level.

5. Finally, manage your bankroll appropriately. If you had a tough day, don't try to win it all back on Hawaii at midnight. Also, track why you played a game and record if the game and the play went how you expected. Always be your own toughest critic when it comes to grading bets.

Undervalued / Overvalued: Six teams to Watch

Undervalued teams can be teams that aren't necessarily great but present fantastic gambling opportunity, while overrated teams could be great teams that end up in the College Football Playoff but you pay a premium to bet them, making them cost prohibitive.

Three Teams That Will Be UNDERVALUED

Tennessee The Vols ended the season with a 5–7 record in Jeremy Pruitt's first year. In the five wins, the Vols upset two SEC opponents. Over the last decade, Tennessee has become the forgotten SEC team, but it is a blue-blood program with pedigree and tradition. The Vols recruit well and have the talent on their roster every year to compete with the best — yet, they haven't had the coaching to do so.

Tennessee has stability and talent at the offensive line and quarterback positions, which helps create continuity and improvement year over year. Look for this Volunteers team to play with greater discipline and perform well when installed as underdogs in conference play.

Baylor Somehow Matt Rhule is still at Baylor for his third season, which is fantastic news for the Bears.

Along with Rhule, Charlie Brewer returns to lead the Bears offense at QB and has a key weapon in Denzel Mims returning at WR. The OL has enough starters returning that the offense should take a step forward. Defensively, they return 85 percent of their production and eight of their top 10 tacklers. The defense should tighten up significantly and prove to be one of the better stop units in the Big 12.

With Rhule in his third year and finally leaning mainly on his own recruits, you can expect Baylor to be solid on both sides of the ball.

UCLA In Chip Kelly's inaugural season at UCLA, things didn't go well, but we wouldn't say they didn't go according to plan. Chip got his touted QB, Dorian Thompson-Robinson, tons of game experience. Better yet, the QB has now had an entire offseason to digest Chip's playbook.

One of the better running backs in the conference is back as well, so remember the name Joshua Kelley. He started nine games last year and in six of them accounted for 100 rushing yards or more.

Last year, Kelly's defense was an absolute nightmare. However, it meant giving lots of freshmen and sophomores playing time. Both sides of the ball appear poised to take major steps forward this season.

Brewer, Ehlinger: Chris Covatta; Wilson: Joe Robbins; Huntley: Peter Brouillet

Three Teams That Will Be OVERVALUED

Texas Overvalued isn't synonymous with "bad" in the gambling world, but when public perception reaches an all-time high, there's opportunity to short the stock. Texas will be good, but expecting them to be great on the heels of a dominant Sugar Bowl win feels like a reach. People are already giving them a seat at the CFP; not so fast, my friends.

Limited returning production could be a major problem, especially early on this season. They do return QB Sam Ehlinger, as well as top-notch WR Collin Johnson, yet they lose top rusher Tre Watson, leading WR Lil'Jordan Humphrey and three all-conference offensive linemen. On defense, they lose their two best linebackers, three of five starters from the back end and their top three tacklers.

While Texas always recruits well, that's a lot of turnover to deal with, especially when you're out of excuses and the pressure is officially on in Austin.

Sam Ehlinger

Terry Wilson

Kentucky There are already expectations about UK maintaining that high level of play we saw in 2019, but don't drink the Kool-Aid.

Kentucky never really developed a consistent passing game, and that responsibility fell on the inaccuracies of Terry Wilson and limited skill position talent. That remains a major problem, and there's no longer a back with the talent of Benny Snell to lean on.

On defense, the Wildcats lose Josh Allen to the NFL, and that isn't the biggest of their issues; they also lose all five starters from the secondary. Secondary experience is the most correlated factor on defense to continuity from year to year in the pass-happy college football world.

Kentucky won't be awful, but the Wildcats certainly won't have the run they had last year. And that's the last thing everyone remembers.

West Virginia As much as bringing in Neal Brown to take over for Dana Holgorsen made sense, there's too much turnover for WVU to regain its rightful spot as one of the better Big 12 teams. Not only are the Mountaineers replacing QB Will Grier, but they also have to fill voids at center, left tackle, receiver and tight end.

The defense loses almost as many impact players as the offense, and the Mountaineers need to find replacements at every level of the stop unit — most importantly for David Long Jr., one of the most explosive and productive Big 12 linebackers.

National Shake-Up: Games to watch in 2019

Georgia -4 vs. Florida In the World's Largest Outdoor Cocktail Party, Georgia is listed as more than a field goal favorite, per BetOnline.ag, and this game could have major ramifications in the national title race. Florida poses a ton of challenges this year, and while both teams will be very good, the Gators finally have the coaching to hang with UGA. The Bulldogs are focused on a return to the CFP, but should they escape the first two months unblemished, things could derail in Jacksonville.

Utah +3 at Washington The Pac-12 hasn't exactly been relevant when discussing the national championship, but this game could end that storyline in 2019. Utah is positioned to be a team that if not properly valued before the year would have shown up in our undervalued section. The Utes return 90 percent of their offensive production and 59 percent of the defense and should be the favorites in the Pac-12 South.

Utah has the pieces to go into Washington and win outright as an underdog. Washington does have Jacob Eason taking over at QB but has significant question marks everywhere else.

Utah plays tremendous defense and employs a brand of football that travels, and this is a game where the Utes get just enough done offensively to come away with the win.

Tyler Huntley

Texas at Baylor While BetOnline.ag doesn't have a line up yet (at press time), this is where we could see Texas falling flat. As noted in the undervalued section, Baylor has lots to be optimistic about. If Texas is in this one with playoff implications on the line, Baylor checks all the boxes to play spoiler.

Tom Herman is one of the best to bet on as an underdog, but he is going to be a road favorite here against another coach who happens to be a great underdog coach in Matt Rhule. Expect a big win over Texas.

(Above lines courtesy of BetOnline.ag)

Win Totals

Tennessee OVER 7

When analyzing their schedule, the Vols have three games to start the year in which they will be favorites (two of which will have spreads of at least four TDs or more).

Assuming they take care of business against Georgia State, BYU and Chattanooga, their remaining schedule presents some challenges but quite a few winnable games. At Florida, home vs. Georgia and at Bama we assume to be losses. Between Mississippi State, South Carolina, UAB, at Kentucky, at Missouri and Vanderbilt, they need to find five wins.

Ty Chandler

Mississippi State could experience growing pains after having significant departures for the NFL as well as a QB change. South Carolina at home is a game in which Tennessee will be favored. UAB should be a win. Kentucky still has problems generating offense. Missouri loses QB Drew Lock, and the Vols finish the year getting Vanderbilt at home.

Eight wins could be the floor for this team, with an outside shot at exceeding their expectations by two or more games.

Florida State OVER 7.5

Much like Tennessee, FSU recruits at a top-15 level as a perennial power. While the first season for Willie Taggart didn't go according to plan, there's a lot to like. The Noles rank 13th in returning production, and the schedule is rather favorable.

The only surefire loss, at least on paper, is a visit to the defending national champion Clemson Tigers. Beyond that, every game is winnable. They get the U and Syracuse at home and Boise State in Jacksonville. FSU faithful may have their hopes restored as a return to bowl eligibility could come with a 9–3 record.

Utah OVER 8.5 -150

Looking at the schedule, things set up favorably. Arizona State, UCLA, Colorado and Cal at home are all games that should be wins. The only spots where Utah will be a dog: the trip to Washington and a game against a USC team that has a myriad of questions. Taking over 8.5 for a team that is an underdog in, at most, two games lines up rather nicely with an experienced head coach.

National Title Favorite (Fav, Value, Long Shot)

The Favorite: Clemson +175

It's not hard to see why Clemson is the favorite. The Tigers are the reigning champs, play a soft ACC schedule and return QB Trevor Lawrence. Barring injuries at key positions, they will be in the CFP.

The Value: Florida 33/1

The Gators get Miami early, Auburn at home and Florida State at home. If they can get by LSU in Death Valley, the Georgia game could have SEC Championship Game and College Football Playoff implications. At 33/1, we get a non-Clemson, non-Alabama team with the talent to win it with a schedule that sets up positively.

The Long Shot: USC and Utah 100/1

USC has issues from the administration on down, but it hasn't precluded the Trojans from getting talent to come to the program. JT Daniels is a highly touted QB who started as a true freshman and showed glimpses of greatness. Beyond that, the Pac-12 has been left out of the playoff, and getting the most talented team at 100/1 is intriguing. At the same time, the most complete team in the league, Utah, at 100/1 also makes sense. One of the two teams could be in the Pac-12 title game and looking at a chance to get to the CFP, with a few breaks.

Kadarius Toney

Heisman Hopefuls

Tua Tagovailoa

The Heisman committee has shown tons of biases over the past decade in selecting the winner. Essentially, you need to be a quarterback who plays in the ACC, SEC, Big Ten or Big 12 and on a team that goes 9–3 or better. Using that standard, you can eliminate a lot of choices. Trevor Lawrence and Tua Tagovailoa are the deserved favorites at +350 and +500, respectively, and the Heisman was Tua's last year until it wasn't.

Tua at 5/1 is hard to ignore. The media loves a comeback story, and Tua losing the Heisman and National Championship Game last year gives them the opportunity to spin that narrative. He should be getting nearly all the snaps this year, and his numbers will be even more ridiculous than last year.

Justin Fields (at 12/1) is a highly touted quarterback who offers dual-threat capabilities playing in an offense that should put up prolific numbers. Beyond that, Ohio State is going to be in the Playoff conversation all year, and Fields will be steering that ship.

Check out the Bet the Board podcast featuring Todd Fuhrman and Payne Insider for the best insight on sports gambling. Visit BetTheBoardPodcast.com or visit Apple Podcasts to listen.

Chandler: Tom DiPace; Tua, Toney: Harrison McClary

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Recruiting

2019 SIGNEES

Rankings provided by 247 COMPOSITE

1. Nolan Smith	IMG Academy (Savannah, GA)	LB	6-3	235	Georgia
2. Kayvon Thibodeaux	Oaks Christian (Thousand Oaks, CA)	DE	6-5	239	Oregon
3. Derek Stingley Jr.	Dunham School (Baton Rouge, LA)	CB	6-1	188	LSU
4. Jadon Haselwood	Cedar Grove (Ellenwood, GA)	WR	6-3	196	Oklahoma
5. Antonio Alfano	Colonia (Colonia, NJ)	DE	6-4	288	Alabama
6. Trey Sanders	IMG Academy (Bradenton, FL)	RB	6-0	214	Alabama
7. Evan Neal	IMG Academy (Okeechobee, FL)	OT	6-7	360	Alabama
8. Zacch Pickens	T.L. Hanna (Anderson, SC)	DT	6-3	293	South Carolina
9. Bru McCoy	Mater Dei (Palos Verdes, CA)	ATH	6-2	205	Texas
10. Darnell Wright	Huntington (Huntington, WV)	OT	6-6	320	Tennessee
11. Spencer Rattler	Pinnacle (Phoenix, AZ)	QB	6-1	192	Oklahoma
12. Zach Harrison	Olentangy Orange (Lewis Center, OH)	DE	6-5	253	Ohio State
13. John Emery Jr.	Destrehan (Destrehan, LA)	RB	5-11	210	LSU
14. Daxton Hill	Booker T. Washington (Tulsa, OK)	S	6-1	186	Michigan
15. Kenyon Green	Atascocita (Humble, TX)	OT	6-4	322	Texas A&M
16. Demarvin Leal	Judson (San Antonio, TX)	DT	6-4	289	Texas A&M
17. Logan Brown	East Kentwood (Grand Rapids, MI)	OT	6-6	305	Wisconsin
18. Brandon Smith	Louisa County (Louisa, VA)	LB	6-4	225	Penn State
19. Nakobe Dean	Horn Lake (Horn Lake, MS)	LB	6-0	220	Georgia

20. Garrett Wilson	Lake Travis (Austin, TX)	WR	6-0	175	Ohio State
21. Theo Wease	Allen (Allen, TX)	WR	6-3	202	Oklahoma
22. Travon Walker	Upson-Lee (Thomaston, GA)	DT	6-5	285	Georgia
23. Andrew Booth	Archer (Dacula, GA)	CB	6-1	188	Clemson
24. George Pickens	Hoover (Hoover, AL)	WR	6-4	190	Georgia
25. Owen Pappoe	Grayson (Lawrenceville, GA)	LB	6-0	210	Auburn
26. Clay Webb	Oxford (Oxford, AL)	C	6-3	295	Georgia
27. Charles Cross	Laurel (Laurel, MS)	OT	6-5	270	Mississippi State
28. Wanya Morris	Grayson (Loganville, GA)	OT	6-6	312	Tennessee
29. Jerrion Ealy	Jackson Prep (Walnut Grove, MS)	RB	5-10	200	Ole Miss
30. Harry Miller	Buford (Buford, GA)	C	6-4	305	Ohio State
31. Chris Hinton	Greater Atlanta Christian (Norcross, GA)	DT	6-4	280	Michigan
32. Marcel Brooks	Marcus (Flower Mound, TX)	LB	6-2	187	LSU
33. Bo Nix	Pinson Valley (Pinson, AL)	QB	6-2	207	Auburn
34. Jordan Whittington	Cuero (Cuero, TX)	ATH	6-0	198	Texas
35. Jayden Daniels	Cajon (San Bernardino, CA)	QB	6-3	175	Arizona State
36. Dominick Blaylock	Walton (Marietta, GA)	WR	6-1	195	Georgia
37. Tyrique Stevenson	Miami Southridge (Homestead, FL)	CB	6-1	202	Georgia
38. Kyle Ford	Orange Lutheran (Corona, CA)	WR	6-2	212	USC
39. Frank Ladson	South Dade (Miami, FL)	WR	6-3	190	Clemson
40. Pierce Quick	Hewitt-Trussville (Trussville, AL)	OT	6-5	285	Alabama
41. Mykael Wright	Antelope Valley (Valencia, CA)	CB	5-11	180	Oregon
42. Chris Steele	St. John Bosco (Los Angeles, CA)	CB	6-2	187	Florida
43. Jordan Battle	St. Thomas Aquinas (Fort Lauderdale, FL)	S	6-1	187	Alabama
44. Henry To'oto'o	De La Salle (Pittsburg, CA)	LB	6-2	230	Tennessee
45. Lewis Cine	Trinity Christian School (Cedar Hill, TX)	S	6-2	180	Georgia
46. Zach Charbonnet	Oaks Christian (Camarillo, CA)	RB	6-2	215	Michigan
47. Ishmael Sopsher	Amite (Amite, LA)	DT	6-4	334	Alabama
48. Kaiir Elam	The Benjamin School (North Palm Beach, FL)	CB	6-1	182	Florida
49. Jake Smith	Notre Dame Preparatory (Scottsdale, AZ)	WR	6-1	189	Texas
50. Akeem Dent	Palm Beach Central (Pahokee, FL)	CB	5-11	180	Florida State
51. Devontae Dobbs	Belleville (Detroit, MI)	OG	6-4	304	Michigan State
52. Joe Ngata	Folsom (Folsom, CA)	WR	6-3	205	Clemson
53. Baylor Cupp	Brock (Brock, TX)	TE	6-6	240	Texas A&M
54. Jeremiah Payton	Fletcher (Neptune Beach, FL)	WR	6-1	186	Miami (Fla.)
55. Nick Cross	DeMatha Catholic (Hyattsville, MD)	S	6-0	206	Maryland
56. Drake Jackson	Centennial (Corona, CA)	DE	6-3	269	USC
57. Julian Barnett	Belleville (Harper Woods, MI)	CB	6-2	189	Michigan State
58. Tyler Johnson	Oak Ridge (Conroe, TX)	OT	6-5	308	Texas
59. George Karlaftis	West Lafayette (West Lafayette, IN)	DE	6-4	265	Purdue
60. Kyle Hamilton	Marist School (Atlanta, GA)	S	6-3	190	Notre Dame
61. Quavaris Crouch	Harding University (Charlotte, NC)	ATH	6-1	237	Tennessee
62. Justin Eboigbe	Forest Park (Forest Park, GA)	DE	6-5	263	Alabama
63. Jonah Tauanu'u	Narbonne (Harbor City, CA)	OT	6-5	305	Oregon
64. Ryan Hilinski	Orange Lutheran (Orange, CA)	QB	6-3	230	South Carolina
65. Graham Mertz	Blue Valley North (Mission, KS)	QB	6-3	205	Wisconsin
66. Trejan Bridges	Hebron (Carrollton, TX)	WR	6-1	180	Oklahoma
67. DeGabriel Floyd	Westlake (Westlake Village, CA)	LB	6-2	231	Texas
68. Mase Funa	Mater Dei (Anaheim, CA)	LB	6-2	245	Oregon
69. Charles Moore	Louisville (Louisville, MS)	DE	6-4	268	Auburn
70. Dylan Wright	West Mesquite (Mesquite, TX)	WR	6-4	215	Texas A&M
71. Khris Bogle	Cardinal Gibbons (Fort Lauderdale, FL)	DE	6-4	212	Florida
72. Brian Williams	Bishop Dunne (Dallas, TX)	S	6-1	211	Texas A&M

Smith, Wease, Hellams, Cain: AP

73. Nathan Pickering	Mount Olive, MS (Mount Olive, MS)	DT	6-4	286	Mississippi State
74. Sean Rhyan	San Juan Hills (San Juan Capistrano, CA)	OG	6-5	324	UCLA
75. Jowon Briggs	Walnut Hills (Cincinnati, OH)	DT	6-2	295	Virginia
76. Amari Kight	Thompson (Alabaster, AL)	OT	6-7	315	Alabama
77. Byron Young	West Jones (Laurel, MS)	DT	6-3	290	Alabama
78. Shane Lee	St. Frances Academy (Burtonsville, MD)	LB	6-0	243	Alabama
79. Devyn Ford	North Stafford (Stafford, VA)	RB	5-11	195	Penn State
80. Demani Richardson	Waxahachie (Waxahachie, TX)	S	6-1	209	Texas A&M
81. Caedan Wallace	Hun School (Robbinsville, NJ)	OG	6-5	288	Penn State
82. Jameson Williams	Cardinal Ritter Prep (St. Louis, MO)	WR	6-2	169	Ohio State
83. Faatui Tuitele	St. Louis (Honolulu, HI)	DT	6-3	304	Washington
84. DeMarcco Hellams	DeMatha Catholic (Hyattsville, MD)	S	6-1	203	Alabama

85. Elijah Higgins	Bowie (Austin, TX)	WR	6-3	214	Stanford
86. Jacob Bandes	Pittsburg (Pittsburg, CA)	DT	6-2	315	Washington
87. Wan'Dale Robinson	Western Hills (Frankfort, KY)	RB	5-9	175	Nebraska
88. Ty'Ron Hopper	Roswell (Alpharetta, GA)	LB	6-2	197	Florida
89. Rian Davis	Wekiva (Apopka, FL)	LB	6-2	240	Georgia
90. Mark-Antony Richards	Wellington (West Palm Beach, FL)	ATH	6-1	195	Auburn
91. Jeffery Carter	Mansfield Legacy (Mansfield, TX)	CB	6-0	186	Alabama
92. Adisa Isaac	Canarsie (Brooklyn, NY)	DE	6-5	220	Penn State
93. Sam Howell	Sun Valley (Monroe, NC)	QB	6-0	225	North Carolina
94. Mycah Pittman	Calabasas (Calabasas, CA)	WR	5-11	195	Oregon
95. Zeke Correll	Anderson (Cincinnati, OH)	C	6-4	285	Notre Dame
96. Erick Young	Fort Bend Bush (Richmond, TX)	CB	6-0	208	Texas A&M
97. Kardell Thomas	Southern University Lab (Baton Rouge, LA)	OG	6-3	356	LSU
98. Noah Cain	IMG Academy (Baton Rouge, LA)	RB	5-10	208	Penn State
99. Marquez Beason	Duncanville (Duncanville, TX)	ATH	5-10	177	Illinois
100. Jaren Handy	Hattiesburg (Hattiesburg, MS)	DE	6-5	278	Auburn
101. William Putnam	Plant (Tampa, FL)	OG	6-4	295	Clemson
102. Brandon Turnage	Lafayette (Oxford, MS)	CB	6-1	185	Alabama
103. Treylon Burks	Warren (Warren, AR)	WR	6-3	225	Arkansas
104. Keon Zipperer	Lakeland (Lakeland, FL)	TE	6-2	240	Florida
105. Mazi Smith	East Kentwood (Grand Rapids, MI)	DT	6-3	290	Michigan
106. Doug Nester	Spring Valley (Huntington, WV)	OG	6-7	305	Virginia Tech
107. Tyler Owens	Plano East (Plano, TX)	S	6-2	197	Texas
108. Trente Jones	Grayson (Grayson, GA)	OT	6-6	282	Michigan
109. Mohamoud Diabate	Auburn (Auburn, AL)	LB	6-3	215	Florida
110. Christian Harris	University Lab (Baton Rouge, LA)	LB	6-2	235	Alabama
111. Ramel Keyton	Marietta (Marietta, GA)	WR	6-3	185	Tennessee
112. Trey Palmer	Kentwood (Kentwood, LA)	WR	6-0	179	LSU
113. David Bell	Warren Central (Indianapolis, IN)	WR	6-1	200	Purdue
114. Cade Stover	Lexington (Mansfield, OH)	LB	6-5	235	Ohio State
115. Ronnie Hickman	DePaul Catholic (Wayne, NJ)	S	6-1	200	Ohio State
116. Isaiah Williams	Trinity Catholic (St. Louis, MO)	ATH	5-10	170	Illinois
117. Brendan Gant	Kathleen (Lakeland, FL)	S	6-1	192	Florida State
118. Quinn Carroll	Edina Senior (Minneapolis, MN)	OT	6-6	295	Notre Dame
119. Austin Jones	Bishop O'Dowd (Antioch, CA)	RB	5-10	195	Stanford
120. John Dunmore	Chaminade-Madonna Prep (Hollywood, FL)	WR	6-2	172	Penn State
121. Austin Stogner	Prestonwood Christian (Plano, TX)	TE	6-6	235	Oklahoma
122. Trezman Marshall	Clinch County (Homerville, GA)	LB	6-0	236	Georgia
123. Kevin Harris	Grayson (Loganville, GA)	DE	6-4	228	Alabama
124. Enokk Vimahi	Kahuku (Kahuku, HI)	OG	6-5	263	Ohio State
125. Branson Bragg	Crandall (Combine, TX)	C	6-4	308	Stanford
126. Trent McDuffie	St. John Bosco (Westminster, CA)	CB	5-11	187	Washington
127. Marcus Banks	Dekaney (Houston, TX)	CB	6-0	166	Alabama
128. Laiatu Latu	Jesuit (Sacramento, CA)	DE	6-4	272	Washington
129. Maurice Hampton	Memphis University School (Arlington, TN)	CB	6-0	205	LSU
130. Sheridan Jones	Maury (Norfolk, VA)	CB	6-1	175	Clemson
131. Kenyatta Watson II	Grayson (Loganville, GA)	CB	6-2	182	Texas
132. Hudson Henry	Pulaski Academy (Little Rock, AR)	TE	6-5	230	Arkansas
133. Zion Puckett	Spalding (Griffin, GA)	S	6-0	200	Auburn
134. Joseph Anderson	Oakland (Murfreesboro, TN)	DE	6-4	268	South Carolina
135. Lance Wilhoite	Franklin Road Academy (Nashville, TN)	WR	6-3	186	Oregon
136. Puka Nacua	Orem (Provo, UT)	WR	6-2	190	Washington
137. Tyler Davis	Wekiva (Apopka, FL)	DT	6-1	293	Clemson
138. Siaki Ika	East (Salt Lake City, UT)	DT	6-3	372	LSU
139. Tyrion Davis-Price	Southern University Lab (Baton Rouge, LA)	RB	6-1	235	LSU
140. Arjei Henderson	Fort Bend Travis (Sugar Land, TX)	WR	6-1	183	Florida
141. Stephen Herron	Trinity (New Albany, IN)	DE	6-4	238	Stanford
142. Travis Jay	Madison County (Madison, FL)	CB	6-1	185	Florida State
143. Sean Dollars	Mater Dei (Rancho Cucamonga, CA)	RB	5-10	185	Oregon
144. Keiondre Jones	Callaway (Hogansville, GA)	OG	6-4	341	Auburn
145. Marcus Washington	Trinity Catholic (St. Louis, MO)	WR	6-2	191	Texas
146. Nick Henrich	Burke (Omaha, NE)	LB	6-4	210	Nebraska
147. Noa Pola-Gates	Williams Field (Gilbert, AZ)	CB	5-11	165	Nebraska
148. Derick Hall	Gulfport (Gulfport, MS)	DE	6-4	216	Auburn
149. Joseph Charleston	Milton (Alpharetta, GA)	S	6-2	190	Clemson
150. Cameron Smith	Westwood (Blythewood, SC)	CB	6-1	168	South Carolina

151. Diwun Black	Osceola (Kissimmee, FL)	LB	6-4	216	Florida
152. Isaiah Spiller	Klein Collins (Spring, TX)	RB	6-1	201	Texas A&M
153. Bryce Benhart	Lakeville North (Lakeville, MN)	OT	6-9	298	Nebraska
154. Ray Parker	Ruston (Ruston, LA)	OT	6-5	270	LSU
155. Dannis Jackson	Sumrall (Sumrall, MS)	WR	6-1	187	Ole Miss
156. Jaylen McCollough	Hillgrove (Powder Springs, GA)	S	6-0	194	Tennessee
157. Jaquaze Sorrells	Winter Park (Winter Park, FL)	DT	6-3	310	South Carolina
158. King Mwikuta	Troup County (West Point, GA)	DE	6-5	240	Alabama
159. Donte Starks	John Ehret (Marrero, LA)	LB	6-1	225	LSU
160. Christian Williams	Daphne (Daphne, AL)	CB	6-1	182	Miami (Fla.)
161. William Norton	Christian Brothers (Memphis, TN)	DE	6-6	275	Georgia
162. Jaden Payoute	Lloyd C. Bird (Chesterfield, VA)	ATH	6-2	195	Virginia Tech
163. Jeremiah Criddell	Mater Dei (Santa Ana, CA)	S	5-11	188	Oklahoma
164. Braylen Ingraham	St. Thomas Aquinas (Fort Lauderdale, FL)	DE	6-4	260	Alabama
165. David Gbenda	Cinco Ranch (Katy, TX)	LB	6-0	218	Texas
166. Devonta Lee	Amite (Amite, LA)	ATH	6-2	212	LSU
167. Dontae Lucas	IMG Academy (Overtown, FL)	OG	6-3	323	Florida State
168. Savion Jackson	Clayton (Clayton, NC)	DE	6-3	260	NC State
169. Brayden Liebrock	Chandler (Chandler, AZ)	TE	6-5	220	Texas
170. Bryton Constantin	University Lab (Baton Rouge, LA)	LB	6-3	207	Clemson
171. Dylan Morris	Graham-Kapowsin (Puyallup, WA)	QB	6-1	195	Washington
172. Jacob Lacey	South Warren (Bowling Green, KY)	DT	6-2	285	Notre Dame
173. Stacey Wilkins	Fairview (Camden, AR)	OT	6-5	284	Oklahoma
174. Nolan Rumler	Archbishop Hoban (Akron, OH)	OG	6-4	290	Michigan
175. Cornelius Johnson	Brunswick School (Greenwich, CT)	WR	6-2	195	Michigan
176. Trevor Keegan	Crystal Lake (Crystal Lake, IL)	OT	6-6	310	Michigan
177. Darrian Dalcourt	St. Frances Academy (Baltimore, MD)	OG	6-3	290	Alabama
178. Ty Robinson	Higley (Gilbert, AZ)	DE	6-5	283	Nebraska

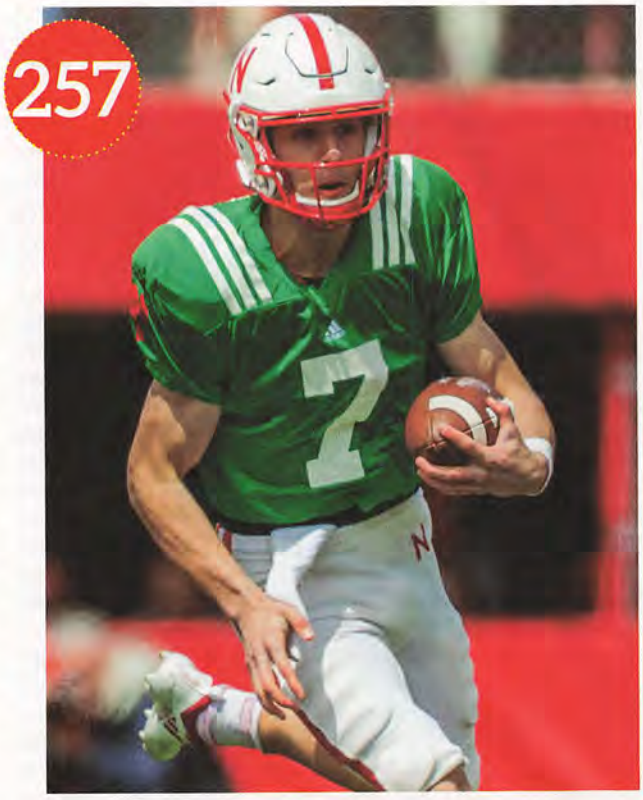
179. Lance Dixon	West Bloomfield (West Bloomfield, MI)	LB	6-2	201	Penn State
180. Taulia Tagovailoa	Thompson (Alabaster, AL)	QB	5-11	214	Alabama
181. Sampson James	Avon (Avon, IN)	RB	6-1	211	Indiana
182. De'Monte Russell	Provine (Jackson, MS)	DE	6-4	216	Mississippi State
183. Andrew Kristofic	Pine-Richland (Gibsonia, PA)	OT	6-5	282	Notre Dame
184. Eric Gray	Lausanne Collegiate School (Memphis, TN)	RB	5-10	194	Tennessee
185. John Olmstead	Saint Joseph (North Brunswick, NJ)	OT	6-6	300	Notre Dame
186. Max Williams	Junipero Serra (Carson, CA)	CB	5-8	173	USC
187. Kenny McIntosh	University School (Fort Lauderdale, FL)	RB	6-1	218	Georgia
188. Keontra Smith	Chaminade-Madonna Prep (Hollywood, FL)	S	5-11	192	Miami (Fla.)

189. Woodi Washington	Oakland (Murfreesboro, TN)	CB	5-11	175	Oklahoma
190. Chris Adimora	Mayfair (Lakewood, CA)	S	6-2	192	Texas
191. C.J. Clark	North Stanly (New London, NC)	DT	6-3	303	NC State
192. Joshua Pakola	St. Francis (Newark, CA)	DE	6-3	267	Stanford
193. Ge'mon Eaford	Deerfield Beach (Deerfield Beach, FL)	LB	6-0	217	Oregon
194. Jalen Curry	St. Pius X (Houston, TX)	WR	6-3	208	Arizona
195. Maninoa Tufono	Punahou (Haleiwa, HI)	LB	6-3	225	USC
196. Makiya Tongue	University Lab (Baton Rouge, LA)	ATH	6-2	210	Georgia
197. Bryan Hudson	Scott County (Georgetown, KY)	OG	6-4	292	Virginia Tech
198. Joseph Weté	Gonzaga (Washington, DC)	DE	6-4	220	Oklahoma
199. Daniel Heimuli	Menlo-Atherton (East Palo Alto, CA)	LB	6-2	225	Washington
200. Jalen Perry	Dacula (Dacula, GA)	CB	6-1	188	Michigan
201. Josh Delgado	IMG Academy (Carson, CA)	WR	5-11	181	Oregon
202. Quashon Fuller	Lehigh Senior (Lehigh Acres, FL)	DE	6-3	270	Florida State
203. Kam Brown	Colleyville Heritage (Colleyville, TX)	WR	6-0	170	Texas A&M
204. Milton Wright	Christian Academy (Louisville, KY)	WR	6-3	200	Purdue
205. Jaleel McRae	IMG Academy (New Smyrna Beach, FL)	LB	6-2	230	Florida State
206. Anthony Bradford	Muskegon (Muskegon, MI)	OG	6-5	355	LSU
207. Avery Huff	St. Thomas Aquinas (Fort Lauderdale, FL)	LB	6-3	200	Miami (Fla.)
208. Isaiah Rutherford	Jesuit (Sacramento, CA)	CB	6-0	192	Notre Dame
209. Grayson Boomer	Collinsville (Collinsville, OK)	TE	6-5	230	Oklahoma State
210. Jahfari Harvey	Vero Beach (Port St. Lucie, FL)	DE	6-4	225	Miami (Fla.)
211. Isaiah Foskey	De La Salle (Antioch, CA)	DE	6-4	233	Notre Dame
212. Osita Ekwonu	Providence Day School (Charlotte, NC)	LB	6-2	220	Notre Dame
213. Khafre Brown	West Mecklenburg (Charlotte, NC)	WR	6-0	176	North Carolina
214. Xavier Truss	Bishop Hendricken (Warwick, RI)	OT	6-7	316	Georgia
215. Jonathan Mingo	Brandon (Brandon, MS)	WR	6-2	200	Ole Miss
216. Taisun Phommachanh	Avon Old Farms (Bridgeport, CT)	QB	6-3	194	Clemson
217. Jarrian Jones	Northwest Rankin (Brandon, MS)	S	6-1	185	Mississippi State
218. Cam'Ron Kelly	Oscar Smith (Chesapeake, VA)	ATH	6-1	190	Auburn
219. Josh Calvert	Oaks Christian (Oak Park, CA)	LB	6-2	227	Washington
220. Derrian Brown	Buford (Buford, GA)	RB	5-11	188	Texas
221. Kalen DeLoach	Islands (Savannah, GA)	LB	6-0	206	Florida State
222. Jaden Davis	St. Thomas Aquinas (Fort Lauderdale, FL)	CB	5-9	166	Oklahoma
223. Anthony Solomon	St. Thomas Aquinas (Fort Lauderdale, FL)	LB	6-0	190	Michigan
224. Isaiah Hazel	Dr. Henry Wise (Upper Marlboro, MD)	WR	6-1	190	Maryland
225. Deondrick Glass	Katy (Katy, TX)	RB	5-11	200	Oklahoma State
226. Tyus Fields	William Amos Hough (Cornelius, NC)	CB	5-10	191	Tennessee
227. Warren McClendon	Brunswick (Brunswick, GA)	OT	6-4	318	Georgia
228. Trey Knox	Blackman (Murfreesboro, TN)	WR	6-5	215	Arkansas
229. Max Duggan	Lewis Central (Council Bluffs, IA)	QB	6-2	190	TCU

Spiller, Foskey, Wolfe, McCaffrey: AP

230. Litchfield Ajavon	Episcopal (Baltimore, MD)	S	6-1	189	Notre Dame
231. Steele Chambers	Blessed Trinity Catholic (Roswell, GA)	ATH	6-1	215	Ohio State
232. Jackson Lampley	Montgomery Bell Academy (Nashville, TN)	OT	6-4	300	Tennessee
233. Anthony Harris	Havelock (Havelock, NC)	S	6-2	171	Tennessee
234. Braedon Mowry	Taylor (Katy, TX)	DE	6-4	225	Texas A&M
235. Hank Bachmeier	Murrieta Valley (Murrieta, CA)	QB	6-3	188	Boise State
236. Ryland Goede	Kennesaw Mountain (Acworth, GA)	TE	6-6	240	Georgia
237. Roschon Johnson	Port Neches-Groves (Arthur, TX)	QB	6-1	192	Texas
238. Garrett Shrader	Charlotte Christian (Charlotte, NC)	QB	6-5	215	Mississippi State
239. Jude Wolfe	St. John Bosco (Laguna Hills, CA)	TE	6-6	249	USC
240. Stephon Wright	Cathedral (Los Angeles, CA)	DE	6-3	260	Arizona State
241. Chez Mellusi	Naples (Naples, FL)	RB	5-11	190	Clemson
242. Deyavie Hammond	Lakeland (Lakeland, FL)	OG	6-3	353	Florida
243. Lloyd Summerall	Lakeland (Lakeland, FL)	DE	6-5	220	Florida

244. Keilan Robinson	St. John's College HS (Washington, DC)	RB	5-9	184	Alabama
245. Marcus Stripling	Mayde Creek (Houston, TX)	DE	6-3	260	Oklahoma
246. Patrick Herbert	Sheldon (Eugene, OR)	TE	6-5	225	Oregon
247. Drake London	Moorpark (Moorpark, CA)	WR	6-4	200	USC
248. Salim Turner-Muhammad	Episcopal (Corona, NY)	CB	6-0	170	Stanford
249. Jashawn Sheffield	Frederica Academy (Brunswick, GA)	ATH	6-1	178	Auburn
250. Isaiah Hookfin	Dulles (Sugar Land, TX)	OT	6-5	270	Texas
251. Joshua Harris	Person (Roxboro, NC)	DT	6-2	325	NC State
252. Tristan Sinclair	San Ramon Valley (Alamo, CA)	LB	6-2	202	Stanford
253. Darren Jones	Cajon (San Bernardino, CA)	WR	6-8	185	Utah
254. DJ Dale	Clay-Chalkville (Pinson, AL)	DT	6-3	323	Alabama
255. Langston Anderson	Heritage (Midlothian, TX)	WR	6-2	195	Oklahoma State
256. Beau Robbins	Carmel (Carmel, IN)	DE	6-4	238	Indiana
257. Luke McCaffrey	Valor Christian (Littleton, CO)	ATH	6-2	183	Nebraska
258. Jestin Jacobs	Northmont (Clayton, OH)	LB	6-3	205	Iowa
259. Keyon Ware-Hudson	Mater Dei (Duarte, CA)	DT	6-2	305	Oregon
260. Devin Bush	Edna Karr (New Orleans, LA)	CB	6-0	190	Arkansas
261. Nay'Quan Wright	Miami Carol City (Opa-Locka, FL)	RB	5-8	188	Florida
262. Colby Bowman	St. John Bosco (Orange, CA)	WR	6-3	190	Stanford
263. Peyton Powell	Permian (Odessa, TX)	ATH	6-2	182	Baylor
264. Jaelin Humphries	Mountain View (Lawrenceville, GA)	DT	6-3	303	Florida
265. Raymond Woodie III	Florida State Univ. School (Palmetto, FL)	S	6-1	192	Florida State
266. Karsen Barnhart	Paw Paw (Paw Paw, MI)	OG	6-4	282	Michigan
267. EJ Ndoma-Ogar	Allen (Allen, TX)	OG	6-3	338	Oklahoma
268. Cade McNamara	Damonte Ranch (Reno, NV)	QB	6-1	206	Michigan
269. Tyler Rudolph	St. Thomas More (Waterbury, CT)	S	6-1	205	Penn State
270. Jacob Zeno	John Jay (San Antonio, TX)	QB	6-3	188	Baylor
271. Donavon Greene	Mount Airy (Mount Airy, NC)	WR	6-2	185	Wake Forest
272. La'Vonta Bentley	Jackson-Olin (Birmingham, AL)	LB	6-0	220	Clemson
273. Jirehl Brock	Quincy (Quincy, IL)	RB	5-11	205	Iowa State
274. Ta'Quan Roberson	DePaul Catholic (Wayne, NJ)	QB	6-0	185	Penn State
275. John Metchie	The Peddie School (Brampton, ON)	WR	6-0	195	Alabama
276. Marvin Grant	Martin Luther King (Detroit, MI)	S	6-2	200	Purdue
277. Michael Tarquin	North Marion (Ocala, FL)	OT	6-6	290	Florida
278. Tony Davis	Hunter Huss (Gastonia, NC)	CB	6-2	186	Duke
279. Lance LeGendre	Warren Easton (New Orleans, LA)	QB	6-2	205	Maryland
280. J.R. Walker	Clayton (Clayton, NC)	ATH	6-1	205	Virginia Tech
281. Daimarqua Foster	Hirschi (Wichita Falls, TX)	RB	5-10	195	TCU
282. Eugene Asante	Westfield (Chantilly, VA)	LB	6-1	212	North Carolina
283. Ryan Jacoby	Mentor (Mentor, OH)	OT	6-5	270	Ohio State
284. Osita Smith	Wilde Lake (Bowie, MD)	S	6-2	205	West Virginia
285. Dvon Ellies	McDonogh School (Burtonsville, MD)	DT	6-2	280	Penn State
286. Shammond Cooper	Trinity Catholic (St. Louis, MO)	LB	6-2	195	Illinois
287. Saleem Wormley	Smyrna (Newark, DE)	OG	6-3	318	Penn State
288. Jalani Williams	Parkway North (St. Louis, MO)	S	6-2	170	Missouri
289. Myron Warren	Many (Many, LA)	DE	6-3	240	Texas
290. Tanner Bowles	Glasgow (Glasgow, KY)	OG	6-5	280	Alabama
291. Marcus Major	Millwood (Oklahoma City, OK)	RB	6-0	200	Oklahoma
292. Casey Kline	Brawley Union (Brawley, CA)	ATH	6-4	210	Boise State
293. Joey Yellen	Mission Viejo (Mission Viejo, CA)	QB	6-3	211	Arizona State
294. Jason Blissett	Poly Prep (Queens, NY)	DT	6-4	271	Miami (Fla.)
295. KJ Wallace	Lovett School (Atlanta, GA)	CB	5-10	187	Notre Dame
296. Jaelyn Lay	Riverdale (Riverdale, GA)	TE	6-6	245	Clemson
297. Cameron Davis	Upland (Rancho Cucamonga, CA)	RB	6-0	187	Washington
298. NaNa Osafo-Mensah	Nolan Catholic (Fort Worth, TX)	DE	6-3	224	Notre Dame
299. Jason Rodriguez	Oak Hills (Hesperia, CA)	OT	6-6	325	USC
300. Asa Turner	Carlsbad (Carlsbad, CA)	ATH	6-2	199	Washington



Quarterbacks

1. Spencer Rattler	Pinnacle (Phoenix, AZ)	QB	6-1	192	Oklahoma
2. Bo Nix	Pinson Valley (Pinson, AL)	QB	6-2	210	Auburn
3. Jayden Daniels	Cajon (San Bernardino, CA)	QB	6-3	175	Arizona State
4. Ryan Hilinski	Orange Lutheran (Orange, CA)	QB	6-4	232	South Carolina
5. Graham Mertz	Blue Valley North (Mission, KS)	QB	6-3	205	Wisconsin
6. Sam Howell	Sun Valley (Monroe, NC)	QB	6-0	225	North Carolina
7. Dylan Morris	Graham-Kapowsin (Puyallup, WA)	QB	6-1	195	Washington
8. Taulia Tagovailoa	Thompson (Alabaster, AL)	QB	5-11	203	Alabama
9. Taisun Phommachanh	Avon Old Farms (Bridgeport, CT)	QB	6-3	194	Clemson
10. Max Duggan	Lewis Central (Council Bluffs, IA)	QB	6-2	190	TCU
11. Hank Bachmeier	Murrieta Valley (Murrieta, CA)	QB	6-3	188	Boise State
12. Roschon Johnson	Port Neches-Groves (Arthur, TX)	QB	6-1	192	Texas
13. Garrett Shrader	Charlotte Christian (Charlotte, NC)	QB	6-4	210	Mississippi State
14. Cade McNamara	Damonte Ranch (Reno, NV)	QB	6-1	206	Michigan
15. Jacob Zeno	John Jay (San Antonio, TX)	QB	6-3	188	Baylor
16. Ta'Quan Roberson	DePaul Catholic (Wayne, NJ)	QB	6-0	185	Penn State
17. Lance LeGendre	Warren Easton (New Orleans, LA)	QB	6-2	205	Maryland
18. Joey Yellen	Mission Viejo (Mission Viejo, CA)	QB	6-3	211	Arizona State
19. Jacob Conover	Chandler (Chandler, AZ)	QB	6-1	205	BYU
20. Jalon Jones	Henrico (Richmond, VA)	QB	6-3	190	Florida
21. D'Wan Mathis	Oak Park (Belleville, MI)	QB	6-6	205	Georgia
22. Peter Parrish	Central (Phenix City, AL)	QB	6-1	199	LSU
23. Paul Tyson	Hewitt-Trussville (Trussville, AL)	QB	6-5	217	Alabama
24. KJ Jefferson	North Panola (Sardis, MS)	QB	6-3	211	Arkansas
25. John Rhys Plumlee	Oak Grove (Hattiesburg, MS)	QB	6-1	185	Ole Miss
26. Grant Tisdale	Allen (Allen, TX)	QB	6-1	204	Ole Miss
27. Connor Bazelak	Archbishop Alter (Dayton, OH)	QB	6-3	205	Missouri
28. Michael Johnson Jr.	Sheldon (Eugene, OR)	QB	6-3	192	Penn State
29. Cale Millen	Mount Si (Snoqualmie, WA)	QB	6-4	190	Oregon
30. Grant Gunnell	St. Pius X (Houston, TX)	QB	6-5	222	Arizona
31. Jacob Clark	Rockwall (Rockwall, TX)	QB	6-5	210	Minnesota
32. Cameron Jones	Frederick Douglass (Lexington, KY)	QB	6-7	252	Cincinnati
33. Ty Evans	Palmer Ridge (Colorado Springs, CO)	QB	6-2	192	NC State
34. Brian Maurer	West Port (Ocala, FL)	QB	6-3	184	Tennessee
35. Zach Calzada	Lanier (Buford, GA)	QB	6-3	195	Texas A&M
36. Brendon Clark	Manchester (Midlothian, VA)	QB	6-2	217	Notre Dame
37. Davis Beville	Greenville (Greenville, SC)	QB	6-6	200	Pittsburgh
38. Ethan Long	West Linn (West Linn, OR)	QB	6-2	212	Arizona State
39. Spencer Brasch	Higley (Gilbert, AZ)	QB	6-4	190	California
40. Brendan Costello	San Clemente (San Clemente, CA)	QB	6-0	183	Oklahoma State
41. Sam Johnson	Walled Lake Western (Wixon, MI)	QB	6-4	195	Boston College
42. Jaden Johnson	Kirby (Memphis, TN)	QB	6-2	208	Southern Miss
43. Jordan Yates	Milton (Alpharetta, GA)	QB	5-11	186	Georgia Tech
44. Kedon Slovis	Desert Mountain (Scottsdale, AZ)	QB	6-2	186	USC
45. Dillon Gabriel	Mililani (Mililani, HI)	QB	5-11	186	UCF
46. Maverick McIvor	Central (San Angelo, TX)	QB	6-3	195	Texas Tech
47. Terrance Gipson	Westfield (Houston, TX)	QB	6-0	186	SMU
48. Gunner Cruz	Casteel (Gilbert, AZ)	QB	6-5	227	Washington St.
49. Easton Dean	Labette County (Oswego, KS)	QB	6-6	220	Iowa State
50. David Baldwin-Griffin	IMG Academy (Compton, CA)	QB	6-4	214	Appalachian St.

Running Backs

1. Trey Sanders	IMG Academy (Bradenton, FL)	RB	6-0	214	Alabama
2. John Emery Jr.	Destrehan (Destrehan, LA)	RB	5-11	210	LSU
3. Jerrion Ealy	Jackson Prep (Walnut Grove, MS)	RB	5-10	200	Ole Miss
4. Zach Charbonnet	Oaks Christian (Camarillo, CA)	RB	6-2	215	Michigan
5. Devyn Ford	North Stafford (Stafford, VA)	RB	5-11	195	Penn State
6. Wan'Dale Robinson	Western Hills (Frankfort, KY)	RB	5-9	175	Nebraska
7. Noah Cain	IMG Academy (Baton Rouge, LA)	RB	5-10	208	Penn State
8. Austin Jones	Bishop O'Dowd (Antioch, CA)	RB	5-10	195	Stanford
9. Tyrion Davis-Price	Southern University Lab (Baton Rouge, LA)	RB	6-1	223	LSU
10. Sean Dollars	Mater Dei (Rancho Cucamonga, CA)	RB	5-10	185	Oregon
11. Isaiah Spiller	Klein Collins (Spring, TX)	RB	6-1	213	Texas A&M
12. Sampson James	Avon (Avon, IN)	RB	6-1	211	Indiana
13. Eric Gray	Lausanne Collegiate School (Memphis, TN)	RB	5-10	195	Tennessee
14. Kenny McIntosh	University School (Fort Lauderdale, FL)	RB	6-1	210	Georgia
15. Derrian Brown	Buford (Buford, GA)	RB	5-11	188	Texas
16. Deondrick Glass	Katy (Katy, TX)	RB	5-11	200	Oklahoma State
17. Chez Mellusi	Naples (Naples, FL)	RB	5-11	190	Clemson
18. Keilan Robinson	St. John's College HS (Washington, DC)	RB	5-9	184	Alabama
19. Nay'Quan Wright	Miami Carol City (Miami Gardens, FL)	RB	5-9	195	Florida
20. Jirehl Brock	Quincy (Quincy, IL)	RB	5-11	205	Iowa State
21. Daimarqua Foster	Hirschi (Wichita Falls, TX)	RB	5-10	195	TCU

22. Marcus Major	Millwood (Oklahoma City, OK)	RB	6-0	200	Oklahoma
23. Cameron Davis	Upland (Rancho Cucamonga, CA)	RB	6-0	187	Washington
24. D.J. Williams	Sebring (Lake Placid, FL)	RB	5-11	205	Auburn
25. Breece Hall	Northwest (Wichita, KS)	RB	6-0	215	Iowa State
26. Keshawn King	Oakleaf (Orange Park, FL)	RB	5-11	175	Virginia Tech
27. Kyren Williams	St. John Vianney (St. Louis, MO)	RB	5-10	200	Notre Dame
28. Jamious Griffin	Rome (Rome, GA)	RB	5-10	205	Georgia Tech
29. Marcus Crowley	Trinity Christian Academy (Jacksonville, FL)	RB	6-1	200	Ohio State
30. Zonovan Knight	Southern Nash (Bailey, NC)	RB	6-0	190	NC State
31. Tiyon Evans	Hartsville (Hartsville, SC)	RB	5-9	210	Hutchison CC
32. Patrick Garwo	Conwell-Egan Catholic (Levittown, PA)	RB	5-8	208	Boston College
33. Kenan Christon	Madison (San Diego, CA)	RB	5-10	185	USC
34. Darwin Barlow	Newton (Newton, TX)	RB	5-11	195	TCU
35. Rahmir Johnson	Bergen Catholic (Oradell, NJ)	RB	5-10	173	Nebraska
36. Ronald Thompkins	Grayson (Loganville, GA)	RB	5-11	195	Nebraska
37. Qualan Jones	Trinity Christian School (Grand Prairie, TX)	RB	5-11	219	Baylor
38. George Holani	St. John Bosco (Bellflower, CA)	RB	6-0	193	Boise State
39. Julius Davis	Menomonee Falls (Menomonee Falls, WI)	RB	5-11	190	Wisconsin
40. King Doerue	Tascosa (Amarillo, TX)	RB	5-11	205	Purdue
41. Travis Tisdale	Lowndes (Valdosta, GA)	RB	5-9	175	Kentucky
42. John Bivens	Archbishop Alter (Dayton, OH)	RB	6-1	205	Nebraska
43. Josh Henderson	Hun School (Pennington, NJ)	RB	6-0	205	North Carolina
44. Daniel Carter	St. Thomas Aquinas (Margate, FL)	RB	5-10	204	Pittsburgh
45. Aaron Young	Coatesville Area (Coatesville, PA)	RB	5-10	190	Rutgers
46. Taron Madison	Banning (Banning, CA)	RB	6-1	205	Oregon State
47. Jordan Houston	Flint Hill School (Waldorf, MD)	RB	5-9	180	NC State
48. Nathaniel Peat	Rock Bridge (Columbia, MO)	RB	5-8	175	Stanford
49. Tyler Goodson	North Gwinnett (Suwanee, GA)	RB	5-10	192	Iowa
50. Seneca Milledge	Dunbar (Fort Myers, FL)	RB	5-6	155	Virginia

Nix, Sanders: AP

Tight Ends

1. Baylor Cupp	Brock (Brock, TX)	TE	6-6	240	Texas A&M
2. Keon Zipperer	Lakeland (Lakeland, FL)	TE	6-2	242	Florida
3. Austin Stogner	Prestonwood Christian (Plano, TX)	TE	6-6	235	Oklahoma
4. Hudson Henry	Pulaski Academy (Little Rock, AR)	TE	6-5	235	Arkansas
5. Brayden Liebrock	Chandler (Chandler, AZ)	TE	6-5	220	Texas
6. Grayson Boomer	Collinsville (Collinsville, OK)	TE	6-5	230	Oklahoma State
7. Ryland Goede	Kennesaw Mountain (Kennesaw, GA)	TE	6-6	240	Georgia
8. Jude Wolfe	St. John Bosco (Laguna Hills, CA)	TE	6-6	249	USC
9. Patrick Herbert	Sheldon (Eugene, OR)	TE	6-5	225	Oregon
10. Jaelyn Lay	Riverdale (Riverdale, GA)	TE	6-6	245	Clemson
11. Jahleel Billingsley	Phillips Academy (Chicago, IL)	TE	6-4	216	Alabama
12. Jackson Lowe	Cartersville (Cartersville, GA)	TE	6-5	242	Tennessee
13. Erick All	Fairfield (Fairfield, OH)	TE	6-4	225	Michigan
14. Brenton Strange	Parkersburg (Parkersburg, WV)	TE	6-5	210	Penn State
15. Jalen Wydermyer	Dickinson (Dickinson, TX)	TE	6-5	240	Texas A&M
16. Mike Martinez	Mater Dei (Santa Ana, CA)	TE	6-6	246	UCLA
17. Tyler Fromm	Warner Robins (Warner Robins, GA)	TE	6-5	225	Auburn
18. Chris Hickman	Burke (Omaha, NE)	TE	6-5	205	Nebraska
19. Traevon Kenion	Wake Forest (Monroe, NC)	TE	6-3	242	South Carolina
20. Bradley Archer	Livermore (Livermore, CA)	TE	6-4	240	Stanford

Wide Receivers

1. Jadon Haselwood	Cedar Grove (Ellenwood, GA)	WR	6-3	196	Oklahoma
2. Garrett Wilson	Lake Travis (Austin, TX)	WR	6-0	175	Ohio State
3. Theo Wease	Allen (Allen, TX)	WR	6-3	202	Oklahoma
4. George Pickens	Hoover (Hoover, AL)	WR	6-3	190	Georgia
5. Dominick Blaylock	Walton (Marietta, GA)	WR	6-1	195	Georgia
6. Kyle Ford	Orange Lutheran (Corona, CA)	WR	6-2	212	USC
7. Frank Ladson	South Dade (Miami, FL)	WR	6-3	190	Clemson
8. Jake Smith	Notre Dame Preparatory (Scottsdale, AZ)	WR	6-1	189	Texas
9. Joe Ngata	Folsom (Folsom, CA)	WR	6-3	205	Clemson
10. Jeremiah Payton	Fletcher (Neptune Beach, FL)	WR	6-1	186	Miami (Fla.)
11. Trejan Bridges	Hebron (Carrollton, TX)	WR	6-1	180	Oklahoma
12. Dylan Wright	West Mesquite (Mesquite, TX)	WR	6-4	215	Texas A&M
13. Jameson Williams	Cardinal Ritter Prep (St. Louis, MO)	WR	6-2	169	Ohio State
14. Elijah Higgins	Bowie (Austin, TX)	WR	6-3	214	Stanford
15. Mycah Pittman	Calabasas (Calabasas, CA)	WR	5-11	195	Oregon
16. Treylon Burks	Warren (Warren, AR)	WR	6-3	225	Arkansas
17. Ramel Keyton	Marietta (Marietta, GA)	WR	6-3	185	Tennessee
18. Trey Palmer	Kentwood (Kentwood, LA)	WR	6-1	177	LSU
19. David Bell	Warren Central (Indianapolis, IN)	WR	6-1	200	Purdue
20. John Dunmore	Chaminade-Madonna Prep (Hollywood, FL)	WR	6-2	172	Penn State
21. Lance Wilhoite	Franklin Road Academy (Nashville, TN)	WR	6-3	186	Oregon
22. Puka Nacua	Orem (Provo, UT)	WR	6-2	190	Washington
23. Arjei Henderson	Fort Bend Travis (Sugar Land, TX)	WR	6-1	183	Florida
24. Marcus Washington	Trinity Catholic (St. Louis, MO)	WR	6-2	191	Texas
25. Dannis Jackson	Sumrall (Sumrall, MS)	WR	6-1	187	Ole Miss
26. Cornelius Johnson	Brunswick School (Greenwich, CT)	WR	6-2	195	Michigan
27. Jalen Curry	St. Pius X (Houston, TX)	WR	6-3	208	Arizona
28. Josh Delgado	IMG Academy (Carson, CA)	WR	5-11	181	Oregon
29. Kam Brown	Colleyville Heritage (Colleyville, TX)	WR	6-0	180	Texas A&M
30. Milton Wright	Christian Academy (Louisville, KY)	WR	6-3	200	Purdue
31. Khafre Brown	West Mecklenburg (Charlotte, NC)	WR	6-0	176	North Carolina
32. Jonathan Mingo	Brandon (Brandon, MS)	WR	6-2	200	Ole Miss
33. Isaiah Hazel	Dr. Henry Wise (Upper Marlboro, MD)	WR	6-1	190	Maryland
34. Trey Knox	Blackman (Murfreesboro, TN)	WR	6-5	218	Arkansas
35. Drake London	Moorpark (Moorpark, CA)	WR	6-4	200	USC
36. Darren Jones	Cajon (San Bernardino, CA)	WR	6-8	185	Utah
37. Langston Anderson	Heritage (Midlothian, TX)	WR	6-2	195	Oklahoma State
38. Colby Bowman	St. John Bosco (Orange, CA)	WR	6-3	190	Stanford
39. Donavon Greene	Mount Airy (Mount Airy, NC)	WR	6-2	185	Wake Forest
40. John Metchie	The Peddie School (Brampton, ON)	WR	6-0	195	Alabama
41. Giles Jackson	Freedom (Antioch, CA)	WR	5-8	175	Michigan
42. Nolan Groulx	William Amos Hough (Cornelius, NC)	WR	6-0	185	Wake Forest
43. Ja'Varrius Johnson	Hewitt-Trussville (Trussville, AL)	WR	5-9	170	Auburn
44. Jacoby Pinckney	Dorman (Spartanburg, SC)	WR	6-3	206	Virginia Tech
45. TQ Jackson	Jefferson (Jefferson, TX)	WR	6-4	195	Arkansas
46. Shamar Nash	IMG Academy (Memphis, TN)	WR	6-3	194	Arkansas
47. Genson Hooper-Price	St. John's (Houston, TX)	WR	6-5	206	Northwestern
48. La'Vontae Shenault	DeSoto (DeSoto, TX)	WR	6-1	185	Colorado
49. Demariyon Houston	Millwood (Oklahoma City, OK)	WR	6-0	165	Nebraska
50. Keon Markham	Long Beach Poly (Long Beach, CA)	WR	6-0	175	Arizona State

Offensive Linemen

1. Evan Neal	IMG Academy (Okeechobee, FL)	OT	6-7	360	Alabama
2. Darnell Wright	Huntington (Huntington, WV)	OT	6-6	320	Tennessee
3. Kenyon Green	Atascocita (Humble, TX)	OT	6-4	328	Texas A&M
4. Logan Brown	East Kentwood (Grand Rapids, MI)	OT	6-6	305	Wisconsin
5. Clay Webb	Oxford (Oxford, AL)	C	6-3	290	Georgia
6. Charles Cross	Laurel (Laurel, MS)	OT	6-5	270	Mississippi State
7. Wanya Morris	Grayson (Loganville, GA)	OT	6-6	311	Tennessee
8. Harry Miller	Buford (Buford, GA)	C	6-4	305	Ohio State
9. Pierce Quick	Hewitt-Trussville (Trussville, AL)	OT	6-5	285	Alabama
10. Devontae Dobbs	Belleville (Detroit, MI)	OG	6-4	304	Michigan State
11. Tyler Johnson	Oak Ridge (Conroe, TX)	OT	6-5	308	Texas
12. Jonah Tauanu'u	Narbonne (Harbor City, CA)	OT	6-5	305	Oregon
13. Sean Rhyan	San Juan Hills (San Juan Capistrano, CA)	OG	6-5	324	UCLA
14. Amari Kight	Thompson (Alabaster, AL)	OT	6-7	307	Alabama
15. Caedan Wallace	Hun School (Robbinsville, NJ)	OG	6-5	288	Penn State
16. Zeke Correll	Anderson (Cincinnati, OH)	C	6-4	285	Notre Dame
17. Kardell Thomas	Southern University Lab (Baton Rouge, LA)	OG	6-3	358	LSU
18. William Putnam	Plant (Tampa, FL)	OG	6-4	295	Clemson
19. Doug Nester	Spring Valley (Huntington, WV)	OG	6-7	305	Virginia Tech
20. Trente Jones	Grayson (Grayson, GA)	OT	6-6	282	Michigan
21. Quinn Carroll	Edina Senior (Minneapolis, MN)	OT	6-6	295	Notre Dame
22. Enokk Vimahi	Kahuku (Kahuku, HI)	OG	6-5	263	Ohio State
23. Branson Bragg	Crandall (Combine, TX)	C	6-4	308	Stanford
24. Keiondre Jones	Callaway (Hogansville, GA)	OG	6-4	325	Auburn
25. Bryce Benhart	Lakeville North (Lakeville, MN)	OT	6-9	298	Nebraska
26. Ray Parker	Ruston (Ruston, LA)	OT	6-4	252	LSU
27. Dontae Lucas	IMG Academy (Overtown, FL)	OG	6-3	323	Florida State
28. Stacey Wilkins	Fairview (Camden, AR)	OT	6-5	284	Oklahoma
29. Nolan Rumler	Archbishop Hoban (Akron, OH)	OG	6-4	290	Michigan
30. Trevor Keegan	Crystal Lake (Crystal Lake, IL)	OT	6-6	310	Michigan
31. Darrian Dalcourt	St. Frances Academy (Baltimore, MD)	OG	6-3	290	Alabama
32. Andrew Kristofic	Pine-Richland (Gibsonia, PA)	OT	6-5	282	Notre Dame
33. John Olmstead	Saint Joseph (North Brunswick, NJ)	OT	6-6	300	Notre Dame
34. Bryan Hudson	Scott County (Georgetown, KY)	OG	6-4	292	Virginia Tech
35. Anthony Bradford	Muskegon (Muskegon, MI)	OG	6-5	367	LSU
36. Xavier Truss	Bishop Hendricken (Warwick, RI)	OT	6-7	330	Georgia
37. Warren McClendon	Brunswick (Brunswick, GA)	OT	6-4	320	Georgia
38. Jackson Lampley	Montgomery Bell Academy (Nashville, TN)	OT	6-4	300	Tennessee
39. Deyavie Hammond	Lakeland (Lakeland, FL)	OG	6-4	350	Florida
40. Isaiah Hookfin	Dulles (Sugar Land, TX)	OT	6-5	270	Texas
41. Karsen Barnhart	Paw Paw (Paw Paw, MI)	OG	6-4	282	Michigan
42. EJ Ndoma-Ogar	Allen (Allen, TX)	OG	6-3	338	Oklahoma
43. Michael Tarquin	North Marion (Ocala, FL)	OT	6-6	275	Florida
44. Ryan Jacoby	Mentor (Mentor, OH)	OT	6-5	270	Ohio State
45. Saleem Wormley	Smyrna (Newark, DE)	OG	6-3	318	Penn State
46. Tanner Bowles	Glasgow (Glasgow, KY)	OG	6-5	280	Alabama
47. Jason Rodriguez	Oak Hills (Hesperia, CA)	OT	6-6	325	USC
48. Darius Thomas	Jonesboro (Jonesboro, AR)	OT	6-6	340	Ole Miss
49. Sataoa Laumea	Eisenhower Senior (Rialto, CA)	OG	6-4	305	Utah
50. Joe Tippmann	Bishop Dwenger (Fort Wayne, IN)	OT	6-6	283	Wisconsin

Recruiting // BY POSITION

Defensive Linemen

1. Kayvon Thibodeaux	Oaks Christian (Thousand Oaks, CA)	DE	6-5	239	Oregon
2. Antonio Alfano	Colonia (Colonia, NJ)	DE	6-4	285	Alabama
3. Zacch Pickens	T.L. Hanna (Anderson, SC)	DT	6-5	290	South Carolina
4. Zach Harrison	Olentangy Orange (Lewis Center, OH)	DE	6-5	253	Ohio State
5. Demarvin Leal	Judson (San Antonio, TX)	DT	6-4	285	Texas A&M
6. Travon Walker	Upson-Lee (Thomaston, GA)	DT	6-5	290	Georgia
7. Chris Hinton	Greater Atlanta Christian (Norcross, GA)	DT	6-4	280	Michigan
8. Ishmael Sopsher	Amite (Amite, LA)	DT	6-4	334	Alabama
9. Drake Jackson	Centennial (Corona, CA)	DE	6-3	269	USC
10. George Karlaftis	West Lafayette (West Lafayette, IN)	DE	6-4	265	Purdue
11. Justin Eboigbe	Forest Park (Forest Park, GA)	DE	6-5	263	Alabama
12. Charles Moore	Louisville (Louisville, MS)	DE	6-4	275	Auburn
13. Khris Bogle	Cardinal Gibbons (Fort Lauderdale, FL)	DE	6-4	209	Florida
14. Nathan Pickering	Seminary (Seminary, MS)	DT	6-4	300	Mississippi State
15. Jowon Briggs	Walnut Hills (Cincinnati, OH)	DT	6-2	295	Virginia
16. Byron Young	West Jones (Laurel, MS)	DT	6-3	290	Alabama
17. Faatui Tuitele	St. Louis (Honolulu, HI)	DT	6-3	304	Washington
18. Jacob Bandes	Pittsburg (Pittsburg, CA)	DT	6-2	315	Washington
19. Adisa Isaac	Canarsie (Brooklyn, NY)	DE	6-5	220	Penn State
20. Jaren Handy	Hattiesburg (Hattiesburg, MS)	DE	6-5	280	Auburn
21. Mazi Smith	East Kentwood (Grand Rapids, MI)	DT	6-3	290	Michigan
22. Kevin Harris II	Grayson (Loganville, GA)	DE	6-4	228	Alabama
23. Laiatu Latu	Jesuit (Sacramento, CA)	DE	6-4	272	Washington
24. Joseph Anderson	Oakland (Murfreesboro, TN)	DE	6-4	260	South Carolina
25. Tyler Davis	Wekiva (Apopka, FL)	DT	6-1	293	Clemson
26. Siaki Ika	East (Salt Lake City, UT)	DT	6-4	347	LSU
27. Stephen Herron	Trinity (New Albany, IN)	DE	6-4	238	Stanford
28. Derick Hall	Gulfport (Gulfport, MS)	DE	6-4	225	Auburn
29. Jaquaze Sorrells	Winter Park (Winter Park, FL)	DT	6-2	314	South Carolina
30. King Mwikuta	Troup County (West Point, GA)	DE	6-5	240	Alabama
31. William Norton	Christian Brothers (Memphis, TN)	DE	6-6	285	Georgia
32. Braylen Ingraham	St. Thomas Aquinas (Fort Lauderdale, FL)	DE	6-4	260	Alabama
33. Savion Jackson	Clayton (Clayton, NC)	DE	6-3	260	NC State
34. Jacob Lacey	South Warren (Bowling Green, KY)	DT	6-2	285	Notre Dame
35. Ty Robinson	Higley (Gilbert, AZ)	DE	6-5	283	Nebraska
36. De'Monte Russell	Provine (Jackson, MS)	DE	6-4	220	Mississippi State
37. C.J. Clark	North Stanly (New London, NC)	DT	6-3	303	NC State
38. Joshua Pakola	St. Francis (Newark, CA)	DE	6-3	267	Stanford
39. Joseph Weté	Gonzaga (Washington, DC)	DE	6-4	220	Oklahoma
40. Quashon Fuller	Lehigh Senior (Lehigh Acres, FL)	DE	6-3	270	Florida State
41. Jahfari Harvey	Vero Beach (Port St. Lucie, FL)	DE	6-4	225	Miami (Fla.)
42. Isaiah Foskey	De La Salle (Antioch, CA)	DE	6-4	233	Notre Dame
43. Braedon Mowry	Taylor (Katy, TX)	DE	6-4	225	Texas A&M
44. Stephon Wright	Cathedral (Los Angeles, CA)	DE	6-3	260	Arizona State
45. Lloyd Summerall III	Lakeland (Lakeland, FL)	DE	6-5	209	Florida
46. Marcus Stripling	Mayde Creek (Houston, TX)	DE	6-3	260	Oklahoma
47. Joshua Harris	Person (Roxboro, NC)	DT	6-2	325	NC State
48. DJ Dale	Clay-Chalkville (Pinson, AL)	DT	6-3	323	Alabama
49. Beau Robbins	Carmel (Carmel, IN)	DE	6-4	238	Indiana
50. Keyon Ware-Hudson	Mater Dei (Duarte, CA)	DT	6-2	305	Oregon
51. Jaelin Humphries	Mountain View (Lawrenceville, GA)	DT	6-4	314	Florida
52. Dvon Ellies	McDonogh School (Burtonsville, MD)	DT	6-2	280	Penn State
53. Myron Warren	Many (Many, LA)	DE	6-3	240	Texas
54. Jason Blissett	Poly Prep (Queens, NY)	DT	6-4	271	Miami (Fla.)
55. NaNa Osafo-Mensah	Nolan Catholic (Fort Worth, TX)	DE	6-3	224	Notre Dame
56. Hakeem Beamon	Manchester (Midlothian, VA)	DE	6-4	254	Penn State
57. Roman Harrison	Bainbridge (Bainbridge, GA)	DE	6-2	241	Tennessee
58. David Ojabo	Blair Academy (Aberdeen, Scotland)	DE	6-5	240	Michigan
59. Collin Clay	Putnam City (Oklahoma City, OK)	DE	6-5	261	Arkansas
60. Ja'Darien Boykin	Jones County (Gray, GA)	DE	6-2	235	Louisville
61. Derick Hunter	Dunbar (Fort Myers, FL)	DE	6-4	285	Texas A&M
62. Mataio Soli	Douglas County (Douglasville, GA)	DE	6-4	230	Arkansas
63. Hunter Spears	Sachse (Garland, TX)	DT	6-4	280	Notre Dame
64. Curtis Fann	Emanuel County Institute (Twin City, GA)	DE	6-2	251	Florida State
65. Noah Potter	Mentor (Mentor, OH)	DE	6-6	250	Ohio State
66. Josh Ellison	A&M Consolidated (College Station, TX)	DT	6-3	285	Texas A&M
67. Howard Cross	St. Joseph Regional (Paramus, NJ)	DE	6-2	265	Notre Dame
68. Zion Logue	Lebanon (Lebanon, TN)	DE	6-5	295	Georgia
69. Marcus Hicks	Northwest (Wichita, KS)	DE	6-6	255	Oklahoma
70. Colby Wooden	Archer (Lawrenceville, GA)	DE	6-4	235	Auburn
71. J.J. Weaver	Moore Traditional School (Louisville, KY)	DE	6-5	240	Kentucky
72. Steven Parker	South Oak Cliff (Dallas, TX)	DE	6-4	220	Kansas
73. Sama Paama	Kaimuki (Waipahu, HI)	DT	6-4	336	Washington
74. Karter Johnson	Pickerington Central (Pickerington, OH)	DT	6-3	302	TCU
75. Ani Izuchukwu	Davidson Academy (Hendersonville, TN)	DE	6-4	225	Mississippi State

Linebackers

1. Nolan Smith	IMG Academy (Savannah, GA)	LB	6-3	235	Georgia
2. Brandon Smith	Louisa County (Louisa, VA)	LB	6-4	225	Penn State
3. Nakobe Dean	Horn Lake (Horn Lake, MS)	LB	6-0	220	Georgia
4. Owen Pappoe	Grayson (Lawrenceville, GA)	LB	6-1	215	Auburn
5. Marcel Brooks	Marcus (Flower Mound, TX)	LB	6-2	187	LSU
6. Henry To'oto'o	De La Salle (Pittsburg, CA)	LB	6-2	230	Tennessee
7. DeGabriel Floyd	Westlake (Westlake Village, CA)	LB	6-2	231	Texas
8. Mase Funa	Mater Dei (Anaheim, CA)	LB	6-2	245	Oregon
9. Shane Lee	St. Frances Academy (Burtonsville, MD)	LB	6-0	243	Alabama
10. Ty'Ron Hopper	Roswell (Alpharetta, GA)	LB	6-2	202	Florida
11. Rian Davis	Wekiva (Apopka, FL)	LB	6-2	230	Georgia
12. Mohamoud Diabate	Auburn (Auburn, AL)	LB	6-3	219	Florida
13. Christian Harris	University Lab (Baton Rouge, LA)	LB	6-2	239	Alabama
14. Cade Stover	Lexington (Mansfield, OH)	LB	6-5	235	Ohio State
15. Trezman Marshall	Clinch County (Homerville, GA)	LB	6-1	230	Georgia
16. Nick Henrich	Burke (Omaha, NE)	LB	6-4	210	Nebraska
17. Diwun Black	Osceola (Kissimmee, FL)	LB	6-4	215	Florida
18. Donte Starks	John Ehret (Marrero, LA)	LB	6-1	212	LSU
19. David Gbenda	Cinco Ranch (Katy, TX)	LB	6-0	218	Texas
20. Bryton Constantin	University Lab (Baton Rouge, LA)	LB	6-3	207	Clemson
21. Lance Dixon	West Bloomfield (West Bloomfield, MI)	LB	6-2	201	Penn State
22. Ge'mon Eaford	Deerfield Beach (Deerfield Beach, FL)	LB	6-0	217	Oregon
23. Maninoa Tufono	Punahou (Haleiwa, HI)	LB	6-3	225	USC
24. Daniel Heimuli	Menlo-Atherton (East Palo Alto, CA)	LB	6-2	225	Washington
25. Jaleel McRae	IMG Academy (New Smyrna Beach, FL)	LB	6-2	230	Florida State
26. Avery Huff	St. Thomas Aquinas (Fort Lauderdale, FL)	LB	6-3	200	Miami (Fla.)
27. Osita Ekwonu	Providence Day School (Charlotte, NC)	LB	6-2	220	Notre Dame
28. Josh Calvert	Oaks Christian (Oak Park, CA)	LB	6-2	227	Washington
29. Kalen DeLoach	Islands (Savannah, GA)	LB	6-0	206	Florida State
30. Anthony Solomon	St. Thomas Aquinas (Fort Lauderdale, FL)	LB	6-0	190	Michigan
31. Tristan Sinclair	San Ramon Valley (Alamo, CA)	LB	6-2	202	Stanford
32. Jestin Jacobs	Northmont (Clayton, OH)	LB	6-3	205	Iowa
33. La'Vonta Bentley	Jackson-Olin (Birmingham, AL)	LB	6-0	220	Clemson
34. Eugene Asante	Westfield (Chantilly, VA)	LB	6-1	212	North Carolina
35. Shammond Cooper	Trinity Catholic (St. Louis, MO)	LB	6-2	195	Illinois
36. Cameron Williams	Andrean (Merrillville, IN)	LB	6-3	205	Indiana
37. Andre White Jr.	Harrisburg (Harrisburg, PA)	LB	6-3	224	Texas A&M
38. Tommy Eichenberg	St. Ignatius (Cleveland, OH)	LB	6-3	235	Ohio State
39. Kane Patterson	CPA (Brentwood, TN)	LB	6-1	212	Clemson
40. Jared Casey	Ballard (Louisville, KY)	LB	6-1	232	Kentucky
41. Ke'Shun Brown	Carver (Montgomery, AL)	LB	6-1	229	Texas A&M
42. JD Bertrand	Blessed Trinity Catholic (Roswell, GA)	LB	6-1	220	Notre Dame
43. Spencer Lytle	St. John Bosco (Redondo Beach, CA)	LB	6-3	215	Wisconsin
44. Jack Kiser	Pioneer (Royal Center, IN)	LB	6-2	215	Notre Dame
45. Luke Fulton	Cardinal Mooney (Poland, OH)	LB	6-3	215	Michigan State
46. Ralen Goforth	St. John Bosco (Long Beach, CA)	LB	6-2	224	USC
47. Lee Kpogba	Parkland (Winston-Salem, NC)	LB	6-2	210	Syracuse
48. Mikel Jones	IMG Academy (Miami, FL)	LB	6-2	208	Syracuse
49. Marcus Tillman Jr.	Jones (Orlando, FL)	LB	6-1	220	Texas
50. Keith Maguire	Malvern Prep (Media, PA)	LB	6-2	210	Clemson

McCoy: AP

Defensive Backs

1. Derek Stingley Jr.	Dunham School (Baton Rouge, LA)	CB	6-1	195	LSU
2. Daxton Hill	Booker T. Washington (Tulsa, OK)	S	6-1	186	Michigan
3. Andrew Booth	Archer (Dacula, GA)	CB	6-1	188	Clemson
4. Tyrique Stevenson	Miami Southridge (Homestead, FL)	CB	6-0	202	Georgia
5. Mykael Wright	Antelope Valley (Valencia, CA)	CB	5-11	180	Oregon
6. Chris Steele	St. John Bosco (Los Angeles, CA)	CB	6-1	185	Florida
7. Jordan Battle	St. Thomas Aquinas (Fort Lauderdale, FL)	S	6-1	187	Alabama
8. Lewis Cine	Trinity Christian School (Cedar Hill, TX)	S	6-1	185	Georgia
9. Kaiir Elam	The Benjamin School (N. Palm Beach, FL)	CB	6-1	187	Florida
10. Akeem Dent	Palm Beach Central (Pahokee, FL)	CB	5-11	180	Florida State
11. Nick Cross	DeMatha Catholic (Hyattsville, MD)	S	6-0	206	Maryland
12. Julian Barnett	Belleville (Harper Woods, MI)	CB	6-2	189	Michigan State
13. Kyle Hamilton	Marist School (Atlanta, GA)	S	6-3	190	Notre Dame
14. Brian Williams	Bishop Dunne (Dallas, TX)	S	6-1	211	Texas A&M
15. Demani Richardson	Waxahachie (Waxahachie, TX)	S	6-1	209	Texas A&M
16. DeMarcco Hellams	DeMatha Catholic (Hyattsville, MD)	S	6-1	203	Alabama
17. Jeffery Carter	Mansfield Legacy (Mansfield, TX)	CB	6-0	186	Alabama
18. Erick Young	Fort Bend Bush (Richmond, TX)	CB	6-1	208	Texas A&M
19. Brandon Turnage	Lafayette (Oxford, MS)	CB	6-1	185	Alabama
20. Tyler Owens	Plano East (Plano, TX)	S	6-2	197	Texas
21. Ronnie Hickman	DePaul Catholic (Wayne, NJ)	S	6-1	200	Ohio State
22. Brendan Gant	Kathleen (Lakeland, FL)	S	6-1	192	Florida State
23. Trent McDuffie	St. John Bosco (Westminster, CA)	CB	5-11	187	Washington
24. Marcus Banks	Dekaney (Houston, TX)	CB	6-0	170	Alabama
25. Maurice Hampton Jr.	Memphis University School (Arlington, TN)	CB	6-0	210	LSU
26. Sheridan Jones	Maury (Norfolk, VA)	CB	6-1	175	Clemson
27. Kenyatta Watson II	Grayson (Loganville, GA)	CB	6-2	182	Texas
28. Zion Puckett	Spalding (Griffin, GA)	S	6-0	200	Auburn
29. Travis Jay	Madison County (Madison, FL)	CB	6-1	185	Florida State
30. Noa Pola-Gates	Williams Field (Gilbert, AZ)	CB	5-11	165	Nebraska
31. Joseph Charleston	Milton (Alpharetta, GA)	S	6-2	190	Clemson
32. Cameron Smith	Westwood (Blythewood, SC)	CB	6-0	171	South Carolina
33. Jaylen McCollough	Hillgrove (Powder Springs, GA)	S	6-0	194	Tennessee
34. Christian Williams	Daphne (Daphne, AL)	CB	6-1	182	Miami (Fla.)
35. Jeremiah Criddell	Mater Dei (Santa Ana, CA)	S	5-11	188	Oklahoma
36. Max Williams	Junipero Serra (Carson, CA)	CB	5-8	173	USC
37. Keontra Smith	Chaminade-Madonna Prep (Hollywood, FL)	S	5-11	192	Miami (Fla.)
38. Woodi Washington	Oakland (Murfreesboro, TN)	CB	5-11	175	Oklahoma
39. Chris Adimora	Mayfair (Lakewood, CA)	S	6-2	192	Texas
40. Jalen Perry	Dacula (Dacula, GA)	CB	6-1	188	Michigan
41. Isaiah Rutherford	Jesuit (Sacramento, CA)	CB	6-0	192	Notre Dame
42. Jarrian Jones	Northwest Rankin (Brandon, MS)	S	6-3	185	Mississippi State
43. Jaden Davis	St. Thomas Aquinas (Fort Lauderdale, FL)	CB	5-9	166	Oklahoma
44. Tyus Fields	William Amos Hough (Cornelius, NC)	CB	5-10	190	Tennessee
45. Litchfield Ajavon	Episcopal (Baltimore, MD)	S	6-1	189	Notre Dame
46. Anthony Harris	Havelock (Havelock, NC)	S	6-2	171	Tennessee
47. Salim Turner-Muhammad	Episcopal (Corona, NY)	CB	6-0	170	Stanford
48. Devin Bush	Edna Karr (New Orleans, LA)	CB	6-0	190	Arkansas
49. Raymond Woodie III	Florida State Univ. School (Palmetto, FL)	S	6-1	192	Florida State
50. Tyler Rudolph	St. Thomas More (Waterbury, CT)	S	6-1	205	Penn State
51. Marvin Grant	Martin Luther King (Detroit, MI)	S	6-2	200	Purdue
52. Tony Davis	Hunter Huss (Gastonia, NC)	CB	6-2	186	Duke
53. Osita Smith	Wilde Lake (Bowie, MD)	S	6-2	205	West Virginia
54. Jalani Williams	Parkway North (St. Louis, MO)	S	6-2	175	Missouri
55. KJ Wallace	Lovett School (Atlanta, GA)	CB	5-10	187	Notre Dame
56. Jalen Catalon	Mansfield Legacy (Mansfield, TX)	S	5-10	188	Arkansas
57. Keaton Ellis	State College Area (State College, PA)	CB	6-0	180	Penn State
58. Quinten Johnson	St. John's College HS (Silver Spring, MD)	S	5-11	190	Michigan
59. Jaydon Hill	Bob Jones (Huntsville, AL)	CB	6-0	167	Florida
60. Joey Porter Jr.	North Allegheny (Bakersfield, CA)	CB	6-2	185	Penn State
61. Jaylin Simpson	Frederica Academy (Brunswick, GA)	CB	6-0	175	Auburn
62. Te'Cory Couch	Chaminade-Madonna Prep (Fort Lauderdale, FL)	CB	5-10	148	Miami (Fla.)
63. Greg Brooks Jr.	West Jefferson (Harvey, LA)	CB	5-11	178	Arkansas
64. Jamal Morris	Fort Bend Bush (Richmond, TX)	S	6-2	185	Oklahoma
65. Kejuan Markham	Long Beach Poly (Long Beach, CA)	S	6-1	180	Arizona State
66. Kamren Fabiculanan	Westlake (Camarillo, CA)	CB	6-2	183	Washington
67. Moses Douglass	Springfield (Springfield, OH)	S	6-2	204	Kentucky
68. Briton Allen	IMG Academy (Orlando, FL)	S	6-0	186	USC
69. Tyler Nubin	St. Charles North (Saint Charles, IL)	CB	6-3	190	Minnesota
70. Jordan Clark	University Lab (Baton Rouge, LA)	CB	5-11	168	Arizona State
71. Jammie Robinson	Lee County (Leesburg, GA)	S	6-0	193	South Carolina
72. Ny'Quee Hawkins	Orange (Orange, NJ)	S	6-0	175	Virginia Tech
73. DJ Turner	IMG Academy (Suwanee, GA)	CB	6-0	165	Michigan
74. Cameron Williams	Bakersfield (Bakersfield, CA)	S	5-11	183	Washington
75. Marquis Wilson	Windsor (Windsor, CT)	CB	6-0	175	Penn State

Athletes

1. Bru McCoy	Mater Dei (Palos Verdes, CA)	ATH	6-2	205	Texas
2. Jordan Whittington	Cuero (Cuero, TX)	ATH	6-0	198	Texas
3. Quavaris Crouch	Harding University (Charlotte, NC)	ATH	6-2	230	Tennessee
4. Mark-Antony Richards	Wellington (West Palm Beach, FL)	ATH	6-1	200	Auburn
5. Marquez Beason	Duncanville (Duncanville, TX)	ATH	5-10	177	Illinois
6. Isaiah Williams	Trinity Catholic (St. Louis, MO)	ATH	5-10	170	Illinois
7. Jaden Payoute	Lloyd C. Bird (Chesterfield, VA)	ATH	6-2	195	Virginia Tech
8. Devonta Lee	Amite (Amite, LA)	ATH	6-2	218	LSU
9. Makiya Tongue	University Lab (Baton Rouge, LA)	ATH	6-2	210	Georgia
10. Cam'Ron Kelly	Oscar Smith (Chesapeake, VA)	ATH	6-1	205	Auburn
11. Steele Chambers	Blessed Trinity Catholic (Roswell, GA)	ATH	6-1	215	Ohio State
12. Jashawn Sheffield	Frederica Academy (Brunswick, GA)	ATH	6-1	180	Auburn
13. Luke McCaffrey	Valor Christian (Littleton, CO)	ATH	6-2	183	Nebraska
14. Peyton Powell	Permian (Odessa, TX)	ATH	6-2	182	Baylor
15. J.R. Walker	Clayton (Clayton, NC)	ATH	6-1	205	Virginia Tech
16. Casey Kline	Brawley Union (Brawley, CA) .	ATH	6-4	210	Boise State
17. Asa Turner	Carlsbad (Carlsbad, CA)	ATH	6-2	199	Washington
18. Keveon Mullins	Whitehaven (Memphis, TN)	ATH	6-1	206	South Carolina
19. Tayvion Robinson	Frank W. Cox (Virginia Beach, VA)	ATH	5-10	165	Virginia Tech
20. Raydarious Jones	Horn Lake (Horn Lake, MS)	ATH	6-2	160	LSU
21. Darien Chase	Union (Vancouver, WA)	ATH	6-1	185	Nebraska
22. Jalen Cropper	Buchanan (Parlier, CA)	ATH	6-0	175	Fresno State
23. Tamauzia Brown	Newton (Newton, TX)	ATH	6-1	175	TCU
24. Jayvaun Wilson	Valencia (Valencia, CA)	ATH	6-2	210	Oregon
25. Jamie Nance	Blanchard (Blanchard, OK)	ATH	6-0	160	Nebraska

Recruiting // BY CONFERENCE

ACC

1. Andrew Booth	Archer (Dacula, GA)	CB	6-1	188	Clemson
2. Frank Ladson	South Dade (Miami, FL)	WR	6-3	190	Clemson
3. Akeem Dent	Palm Beach Central (Pahokee, FL)	CB	5-11	180	Florida State
4. Joe Ngata	Folsom (Folsom, CA)	WR	6-3	205	Clemson
5. Jeremiah Payton	Fletcher (Neptune Beach, FL)	WR	6-1	186	Miami (Fla.)
6. Jowon Briggs	Walnut Hills (Cincinnati, OH)	DT	6-2	295	Virginia
7. Sam Howell	Sun Valley (Monroe, NC)	QB	6-0	225	North Carolina
8. William Putnam	Plant (Tampa, FL)	OG	6-4	295	Clemson
9. Doug Nester	Spring Valley (Huntington, WV)	OG	6-7	305	Virginia Tech
10. Brendan Gant	Kathleen (Lakeland, FL)	S	6-1	192	Florida State
11. Sheridan Jones	Maury (Norfolk, VA)	CB	6-1	175	Clemson
12. Tyler Davis	Wekiva (Apopka, FL)	DT	6-1	293	Clemson
13. Travis Jay	Madison County (Madison, FL)	CB	6-1	185	Florida State
14. Joseph Charleston	Milton (Alpharetta, GA)	S	6-2	190	Clemson
15. Christian Williams	Daphne (Daphne, AL)	CB	6-1	182	Miami (Fla.)
16. Jaden Payoute	Lloyd C. Bird (Chesterfield, VA)	ATH	6-2	195	Virginia Tech
17. Dontae Lucas	IMG Academy (Overtown, FL)	OG	6-3	323	Florida State
18. Savion Jackson	Clayton (Clayton, NC)	DE	6-3	260	NC State
19. Bryton Constantin	University Lab (Baton Rouge, LA)	LB	6-3	207	Clemson
20. Keontra Smith	Chaminade-Madonna Prep (Hollywood, FL)	S	5-11	192	Miami (Fla.)
21. C.J. Clark	North Stanly (New London, NC)	DT	6-3	303	NC State
22. Bryan Hudson	Scott County (Georgetown, KY)	OG	6-4	292	Virginia Tech
23. Quashon Fuller	Lehigh Senior (Lehigh Acres, FL)	DE	6-3	270	Florida State
24. Jaleel McRae	IMG Academy (New Smyrna Beach, FL)	LB	6-2	230	Florida State
25. Avery Huff	St. Thomas Aquinas (Fort Lauderdale, FL)	LB	6-3	200	Miami (Fla.)
26. Jahfari Harvey	Vero Beach (Port St. Lucie, FL)	DE	6-4	225	Miami (Fla.)
27. Khafre Brown	West Mecklenburg (Charlotte, NC)	WR	6-0	176	North Carolina
28. Taisun Phommachanh	Avon Old Farms (Bridgeport, CT)	QB	6-3	194	Clemson
29. Kalen DeLoach	Islands (Savannah, GA)	LB	6-0	206	Florida State
30. Chez Mellusi	Naples (Naples, FL)	RB	5-11	190	Clemson
31. Joshua Harris	Person (Roxboro, NC)	DT	6-2	325	NC State
32. Raymond Woodie III	Florida State Univ. School (Palmetto, FL)	S	6-1	192	Florida State
33. Donavon Greene	Mount Airy (Mount Airy, NC)	WR	6-2	185	Wake Forest
34. La'Vonta Bentley	Jackson-Olin (Birmingham, AL)	LB	6-0	220	Clemson
35. Tony Davis	Hunter Huss (Gastonia, NC)	CB	6-2	186	Duke
36. J.R. Walker	Clayton (Clayton, NC)	ATH	6-1	205	Virginia Tech
37. Eugene Asante	Westfield (Chantilly, VA)	LB	6-1	212	North Carolina
38. Jason Blissett	Poly Prep (Queens, NY)	DT	6-4	271	Miami (Fla.)
39. Jaelyn Lay	Riverdale (Riverdale, GA)	TE	6-6	245	Clemson
40. Ja'Darien Boykin	Jones County (Gray, GA)	DE	6-2	235	Louisville

Big 12

1. Jadon Haselwood	Cedar Grove (Ellenwood, GA)	WR	6-3	196	Oklahoma
2. Bru McCoy	Mater Dei (Palos Verdes, CA)	ATH	6-2	205	Texas
3. Spencer Rattler	Pinnacle (Phoenix, AZ)	QB	6-1	192	Oklahoma
4. Theo Wease	Allen (Allen, TX)	WR	6-3	202	Oklahoma
5. Jordan Whittington	Cuero (Cuero, TX)	ATH	6-0	198	Texas
6. Jake Smith	Notre Dame Preparatory (Scottsdale, AZ)	WR	6-1	189	Texas
7. Tyler Johnson	Oak Ridge (Conroe, TX)	OT	6-5	308	Texas
8. Trejan Bridges	Hebron (Carrollton, TX)	WR	6-1	180	Oklahoma
9. DeGabriel Floyd	Westlake (Westlake Village, CA)	LB	6-2	231	Texas
10. Tyler Owens	Plano East (Plano, TX)	S	6-2	197	Texas
11. Austin Stogner	Prestonwood Christian (Plano, TX)	TE	6-6	235	Oklahoma
12. Kenyatta Watson II	Grayson (Loganville, GA)	CB	6-2	182	Texas
13. Marcus Washington	Trinity Catholic (St. Louis, MO)	WR	6-2	191	Texas
14. Jeremiah Criddell	Mater Dei (Santa Ana, CA)	S	5-11	188	Oklahoma
15. David Gbenda	Cinco Ranch (Katy, TX)	LB	6-0	218	Texas
16. Brayden Liebrock	Chandler (Chandler, AZ)	TE	6-5	220	Texas
17. Stacey Wilkins	Fairview (Camden, AR)	OT	6-5	284	Oklahoma
18. Woodi Washington	Oakland (Murfreesboro, TN)	CB	5-11	175	Oklahoma
19. Chris Adimora	Mayfair (Lakewood, CA)	S	6-2	192	Texas
20. Joseph Weté	Gonzaga (Washington, DC)	DE	6-4	220	Oklahoma
21. Grayson Boomer	Collinsville (Collinsville, OK)	TE	6-5	230	Oklahoma State
22. Derrian Brown	Buford (Buford, GA)	RB	5-11	188	Texas
23. Jaden Davis	St. Thomas Aquinas (Fort Lauderdale, FL)	CB	5-9	166	Oklahoma
24. Deondrick Glass	Katy (Katy, TX)	RB	5-11	200	Oklahoma State
25. Max Duggan	Lewis Central (Council Bluffs, IA)	QB	6-2	190	TCU
26. Roschon Johnson	Port Neches-Groves (Arthur, TX)	QB	6-1	192	Texas
27. Marcus Stripling	Mayde Creek (Houston, TX)	DE	6-3	260	Oklahoma
28. Isaiah Hookfin	Dulles (Sugar Land, TX)	OT	6-5	270	Texas
29. Langston Anderson	Heritage (Midlothian, TX)	WR	6-2	195	Oklahoma State
30. Peyton Powell	Permian (Odessa, TX)	ATH	6-2	182	Baylor
31. EJ Ndoma-Ogar	Allen (Allen, TX)	OG	6-3	338	Oklahoma
32. Jacob Zeno	John Jay (San Antonio, TX)	QB	6-3	188	Baylor
33. Jirehl Brock	Quincy (Quincy, IL)	RB	5-11	205	Iowa State
34. Daimarqua Foster	Hirschi (Wichita Falls, TX)	RB	5-10	195	TCU
35. Osita Smith	Wilde Lake (Bowie, MD)	S	6-2	205	West Virginia
36. Myron Warren	Many (Many, LA)	DE	6-3	240	Texas
37. Marcus Major	Millwood (Oklahoma City, OK)	RB	6-0	200	Oklahoma
38. Javonne Shepherd	North Forest (Houston, TX)	OT	6-6	327	Texas
39. Breece Hall	Northwest (Wichita, KS)	RB	6-0	215	Iowa State
40. Marcus Hicks	Northwest (Wichita, KS)	DE	6-6	255	Oklahoma

Big Ten

1. Zach Harrison	Olentangy Orange (Lewis Center, OH)	DE	6-5	253	Ohio State
2. Daxton Hill	Booker T. Washington (Tulsa, OK)	S	6-1	186	Michigan
3. Logan Brown	East Kentwood (Grand Rapids, MI)	OT	6-6	305	Wisconsin
4. Brandon Smith	Louisa County (Louisa, VA)	LB	6-4	225	Penn State
5. Garrett Wilson	Lake Travis (Austin, TX)	WR	6-0	175	Ohio State
6. Harry Miller	Buford (Buford, GA)	C	6-4	305	Ohio State
7. Chris Hinton	Greater Atlanta Christian (Norcross, GA)	DT	6-4	280	Michigan
8. Zach Charbonnet	Oaks Christian (Camarillo, CA)	RB	6-2	215	Michigan
9. Devontae Dobbs	Belleville (Detroit, MI)	OG	6-4	304	Michigan State
10. Nick Cross	DeMatha Catholic (Hyattsville, MD)	S	6-0	206	Maryland
11. Julian Barnett	Belleville (Harper Woods, MI)	CB	6-2	189	Michigan State
12. George Karlaftis	West Lafayette (West Lafayette, IN)	DE	6-4	265	Purdue
13. Graham Mertz	Blue Valley North (Mission, KS)	QB	6-3	205	Wisconsin
14. Devyn Ford	North Stafford (Stafford, VA)	RB	5-11	195	Penn State
15. Caedan Wallace	Hun School (Robbinsville, NJ)	OG	6-5	288	Penn State
16. Jameson Williams	Cardinal Ritter Prep (St. Louis, MO)	WR	6-2	169	Ohio State
17. Wan'Dale Robinson	Western Hills (Frankfort, KY)	RB	5-9	175	Nebraska
18. Adisa Isaac	Canarsie (Brooklyn, NY)	DE	6-5	220	Penn State
19. Noah Cain	IMG Academy (Baton Rouge, LA)	RB	5-10	208	Penn State
20. Marquez Beason	Duncanville (Duncanville, TX)	ATH	5-10	177	Illinois
21. Mazi Smith	East Kentwood (Grand Rapids, MI)	DT	6-3	290	Michigan
22. Trente Jones	Grayson (Grayson, GA)	OT	6-6	282	Michigan
23. David Bell	Warren Central (Indianapolis, IN)	WR	6-1	200	Purdue
24. Cade Stover	Lexington (Mansfield, OH)	LB	6-5	235	Ohio State
25. Ronnie Hickman	DePaul Catholic (Wayne, NJ)	S	6-1	200	Ohio State
26. Isaiah Williams	Trinity Catholic (St. Louis, MO)	ATH	5-10	170	Illinois
27. John Dunmore	Chaminade-Madonna Prep (Hollywood, FL)	WR	6-2	172	Penn State
28. Enokk Vimahi	Kahuku (Kahuku, HI)	OG	6-5	263	Ohio State
29. Nick Henrich	Burke (Omaha, NE)	LB	6-4	210	Nebraska
30. Noa Pola-Gates	Williams Field (Gilbert, AZ)	CB	5-11	165	Nebraska
31. Bryce Benhart	Lakeville North (Lakeville, MN)	OT	6-9	298	Nebraska
32. Nolan Rumler	Archbishop Hoban (Akron, OH)	OG	6-4	290	Michigan
33. Cornelius Johnson	Brunswick School (Greenwich, CT)	WR	6-2	195	Michigan
34. Trevor Keegan	Crystal Lake (Crystal Lake, IL)	OT	6-6	310	Michigan
35. Ty Robinson	Higley (Gilbert, AZ)	DE	6-5	283	Nebraska
36. Lance Dixon	West Bloomfield (West Bloomfield, MI)	LB	6-2	201	Penn State
37. Sampson James	Avon (Avon, IN)	RB	6-1	211	Indiana
38. Jalen Perry	Dacula (Dacula, GA)	CB	6-1	188	Michigan
39. Milton Wright	Christian Academy (Louisville, KY)	WR	6-3	200	Purdue
40. Anthony Solomon	St. Thomas Aquinas (Fort Lauderdale, FL)	LB	6-0	190	Michigan

Pac-12

1. Kayvon Thibodeaux	Oaks Christian (Thousand Oaks, CA)	DE	6-5	239	Oregon
2. Jayden Daniels	Cajon (San Bernardino, CA)	QB	6-3	175	Arizona State
3. Kyle Ford	Orange Lutheran (Corona, CA)	WR	6-2	212	USC
4. Mykael Wright	Antelope Valley (Valencia, CA)	CB	5-11	180	Oregon
5. Drake Jackson	Centennial (Corona, CA)	DE	6-3	269	USC
6. Jonah Tauanu'u	Narbonne (Harbor City, CA)	OT	6-5	305	Oregon
7. Mase Funa	Mater Dei (Anaheim, CA)	LB	6-2	245	Oregon
8. Sean Rhyan	San Juan Hills (San Juan Capistrano, CA)	OG	6-5	324	UCLA
9. Faatui Tuitele	St. Louis (Honolulu, HI)	DT	6-3	304	Washington
10. Elijah Higgins	Bowie (Austin, TX)	WR	6-3	214	Stanford
11. Jacob Bandes	Pittsburg (Pittsburg, CA)	DT	6-2	315	Washington
12. Mycah Pittman	Calabasas (Calabasas, CA)	WR	5-11	195	Oregon
13. Austin Jones	Bishop O'Dowd (Antioch, CA)	RB	5-10	195	Stanford
14. Branson Bragg	Crandall (Combine, TX)	C	6-4	308	Stanford
15. Trent McDuffie	St. John Bosco (Westminster, CA)	CB	5-11	187	Washington
16. Laiatu Latu	Jesuit (Sacramento, CA)	DE	6-4	272	Washington
17. Lance Wilhoite	Franklin Road Academy (Nashville, TN)	WR	6-3	186	Oregon
18. Puka Nacua	Orem (Provo, UT)	WR	6-2	190	Washington
19. Stephen Herron	Trinity (New Albany, IN)	DE	6-4	238	Stanford
20. Sean Dollars	Mater Dei (Rancho Cucamonga, CA)	RB	5-10	185	Oregon
21. Dylan Morris	Graham-Kapowsin (Puyallup, WA)	QB	6-1	195	Washington
22. Max Williams	Junipero Serra (Carson, CA)	CB	5-8	173	USC
23. Joshua Pakola	St. Francis (Newark, CA)	DE	6-3	267	Stanford
24. Ge'mon Eaford	Deerfield Beach (Deerfield Beach, FL)	LB	6-0	217	Oregon
25. Jalen Curry	St. Pius X (Houston, TX)	WR	6-3	208	Arizona
26. Maninoa Tufono	Punahou (Haleiwa, HI)	LB	6-3	225	USC
27. Daniel Heimuli	Menlo-Atherton (East Palo Alto, CA)	LB	6-2	225	Washington
28. Josh Delgado	IMG Academy (Carson, CA)	WR	5-11	181	Oregon
29. Josh Calvert	Oaks Christian (Oak Park, CA)	LB	6-2	227	Washington
30. Jude Wolfe	St. John Bosco (Laguna Hills, CA)	TE	6-6	249	USC
31. Stephon Wright	Cathedral (Los Angeles, CA)	DE	6-3	260	Arizona State
32. Patrick Herbert	Sheldon (Eugene, OR)	TE	6-5	225	Oregon
33. Drake London	Moorpark (Moorpark, CA)	WR	6-4	200	USC
34. Salim Turner-Muhammad	Episcopal (Corona, NY)	CB	6-0	170	Stanford
35. Tristan Sinclair	San Ramon Valley (Alamo, CA)	LB	6-2	202	Stanford
36. Darren Jones	Cajon (San Bernardino, CA)	WR	6-8	185	Utah
37. Keyon Ware-Hudson	Mater Dei (Duarte, CA)	DT	6-2	305	Oregon
38. Colby Bowman	St. John Bosco (Orange, CA)	WR	6-3	190	Stanford
39. Joey Yellen	Mission Viejo (Mission Viejo, CA)	QB	6-3	211	Arizona State
40. Cameron Davis	Upland (Rancho Cucamonga, CA)	RB	6-0	187	Washington

SEC

1. Nolan Smith	IMG Academy (Savannah, GA)	LB	6-3	235	Georgia
2. Derek Stingley Jr.	Dunham School (Baton Rouge, LA)	CB	6-1	195	LSU
3. Antonio Alfano	Colonia (Colonia, NJ)	DE	6-4	288	Alabama
4. Trey Sanders	IMG Academy (Bradenton, FL)	RB	6-0	214	Alabama
5. Evan Neal	IMG Academy (Okeechobee, FL)	OT	6-7	360	Alabama
6. Zacch Pickens	T.L. Hanna (Anderson, SC)	DT	6-4	310	South Carolina
7. Darnell Wright	Huntington (Huntington, WV)	OT	6-6	320	Tennessee
8. John Emery Jr.	Destrehan (Destrehan, LA)	RB	5-11	210	LSU
9. Kenyon Green	Atascocita (Humble, TX)	OT	6-4	328	Texas A&M
10. Demarvin Leal	Judson (San Antonio, TX)	DT	6-4	285	Texas A&M
11. Nakobe Dean	Horn Lake (Horn Lake, MS)	LB	6-0	220	Georgia
12. Travon Walker	Upson-Lee (Thomaston, GA)	DT	6-5	290	Georgia
13. George Pickens	Hoover (Hoover, AL)	WR	6-3	190	Georgia
14. Owen Pappoe	Grayson (Lawrenceville, GA)	LB	6-1	215	Auburn
15. Clay Webb	Oxford (Oxford, AL)	C	6-3	290	Georgia
16. Charles Cross	Laurel (Laurel, MS)	OT	6-5	270	Mississippi State
17. Wanya Morris	Grayson (Loganville, GA)	OT	6-6	311	Tennessee
18. Jerrion Ealy	Jackson Prep (Walnut Grove, MS)	RB	5-10	200	Ole Miss
19. Marcel Brooks	Marcus (Flower Mound, TX)	LB	6-2	187	LSU
20. Bo Nix	Pinson Valley (Pinson, AL)	QB	6-2	210	Auburn
21. Dominick Blaylock	Walton (Marietta, GA)	WR	6-1	195	Georgia
22. Tyrique Stevenson	Miami Southridge (Homestead, FL)	CB	6-0	202	Georgia
23. Pierce Quick	Hewitt-Trussville (Trussville, AL)	OT	6-5	285	Alabama
24. Chris Steele	St. John Bosco (Los Angeles, CA)	CB	6-1	185	Florida
25. Jordan Battle	St. Thomas Aquinas (Fort Lauderdale, FL)	S	6-1	187	Alabama
26. Henry To'oto'o	De La Salle (Pittsburg, CA)	LB	6-2	230	Tennessee
27. Lewis Cine	Trinity Christian School (Cedar Hill, TX)	S	6-1	185	Georgia
28. Ishmael Sopsher	Amite (Amite, LA)	DT	6-4	334	Alabama
29. Kaiir Elam	The Benjamin School (N. Palm Beach, FL)	CB	6-1	187	Florida
30. Baylor Cupp	Brock (Brock, TX)	TE	6-6	240	Texas A&M
31. Quavaris Crouch	Harding University (Charlotte, NC)	ATH	6-2	230	Tennessee
32. Justin Ebiogbe	Forest Park (Forest Park, GA)	DE	6-5	263	Alabama
33. Ryan Hilinski	Orange Lutheran (Orange, CA)	QB	6-4	232	South Carolina
34. Charles Moore	Louisville (Louisville, MS)	DE	6-4	275	Auburn
35. Dylan Wright	West Mesquite (Mesquite, TX)	WR	6-4	215	Texas A&M
36. Khris Bogle	Cardinal Gibbons (Fort Lauderdale, FL)	DE	6-4	209	Florida
37. Brian Williams	Bishop Dunne (Dallas, TX)	S	6-1	211	Texas A&M
38. Nathan Pickering	Seminary (Seminary, MS)	DT	6-4	300	Mississippi State
39. Amari Kight	Thompson (Alabaster, AL)	OT	6-7	307	Alabama
40. Byron Young	West Jones (Laurel, MS)	DT	6-3	290	Alabama

AAC

1. Cameron Jones	Frederick Douglass (Lexington, KY)	QB	6-7	252	Cincinnati
2. Nelson Ceaser	Ridge Point (Missouri City, TX)	DE	6-3	220	Houston
3. Cole Mashburn	Norman North (Norman, OK)	DE	6-3	240	Memphis
4. Danielson Ike	Rockhurst (Kansas City, MO)	OT	6-7	350	SMU
5. Tre'Mon Morris-Brash	St. John's College (Washington, DC)	DE	6-3	230	UCF
6. Keenan Hester	St. Petersburg Catholic (St. Petersburg, FL)	DT	6-3	267	UCF
7. Dallaz Corbitt	Gray Academy (Columbia, SC)	DE	6-7	240	UCF
8. Jalil Clemons	Starkville (Starkville, MS)	DE	6-2	238	Memphis
9. Traveon Freshwater	Northeastern (Elizabeth City, NC)	LB	6-2	220	East Carolina
10. Keontae Burns	Pittsburg (Pittsburg, TX)	ATH	6-3	185	SMU

MAC

1. Cameron Coleman	Cardinal Ritter (St. Louis, MO)	WR	5-11	184	Western Michigan
2. Denzel Daxon	Miami Carol City (Nassau, Bahamas)	DT	6-1	315	Ohio
3. Tyler Foster	Pickerington North (Pickerington, OH)	TE	6-6	235	Ohio
4. Justin Stephens	Trotwood-Madison (Dayton, OH)	TE	6-7	235	Toledo
5. Jerjuan Newton	Central Catholic (St. Petersburg, FL)	ATH	6-0	170	Toledo
6. Micah Kelly	Ocean Springs (Pascagoula, MS)	RB	5-10	190	Toledo
7. Bryce Childress	Trinity Catholic (St. Louis, MO)	DB	5-9	155	Kent State
8. John Branham	Northland (Columbus, OH)	RB	5-10	218	Eastern Michigan
9. Corey Thomas	Penn Hills (Pittsburgh, PA)	S	6-4	190	Akron
10. Peter Hayes-Patrick	Winter Par (Orlando, FL)	RB	5-10	180	Akron

C-USA

1. Dante Walker	Cedar Grove (Riverdale, GA)	DE	6-3	240	Marshall
2. Manny Allen	Rancho Verde (Moreno Valley, CA)	WR	6-2	175	WKU
3. Cameron Wynn	Notre Dame (Chattanooga, TN)	ATH	5-11	175	FAU
4. Jaden Johnson	Kirby (Memphis, TN)	QB	6-2	208	Southern Miss
5. Marcus Lafrance	Deerfield Beach (North Lauderdale, FL)	CB	6-1	175	MTSU
6. Noah Henderson	CPA (Nashville, TN)	WR	6-1	195	Charlotte
7. Diamonte Howard	Miami Southridge (Perrine, FL)	LB	6-2	178	FAU
8. Glover Cook	Vanguard (Ocala, FL)	RB	6-0	180	FAU
9. Latrell Jean	Lakeland (Lakeland, FL)	DE	6-2	255	FAU
10. Jayme Simmons	Thompson (Alabaster, AL)	OT	6-5	270	UAB

MW

1. Hank Bachmeier	Murrieta Valley (Murrieta, CA)	QB	6-3	188	Boise State
2. Casey Kline	Brawley Union (Brawley, CA)	ATH	6-4	210	Boise State
3. Jalen Cropper	Buchanan (Parlier, CA)	ATH	6-0	175	Fresno State
4. George Holani	St. John Bosco (Bellflower, CA)	RB	6-0	193	Boise State
5. Jamaal Bell	Antelope Valley (Lancaster, CA)	WR	5-10	165	Nevada
6. Lolani Langi	Bingham (South Jordan, UT)	LB	6-2	223	Boise State
7. Kyheem Waleed	Casteel (Queen Creek, AZ)	WR	6-3	190	Boise State
8. Brandon Crossley	Little Elm (Little Elm, TX)	CB	5-11	175	Colorado State
9. JL Skinner	Point Loma (San Diego, CA)	ATH	6-3	185	Boise State
10. Ty McCullouch	Rancho Verde (Moreno Valley, CA)	WR	6-1	170	Colorado State

SUN BELT

1. Reddy Steward	Austin (Decatur, AL)	CB	5-11	175	Troy
2. David Baldwin-Griffin	IMG Academy (Compton, CA)	QB	6-4	214	Appalachian State
3. Kendall Wilkerson	Kentwood (Kentwood, LA)	DE	6-5	265	Louisiana
4. Ahdarrious Gee	Crisp County (Cordele, GA)	LB	6-1	190	Troy
5. Brandon Legendre	E.D. White Catholic (Thibodaux, LA)	ATH	5-9	180	Louisiana
6. Tyler Guidry	Southern University Lab (Baton Rouge, LA)	LB	6-2	220	Louisiana
7. Raykwon Anderson	Charlton County (Folkston, GA)	CB	5-9	167	Appalachian State
8. David Spaulding	Bradwell Institute (Hinesville, GA)	CB	6-2	185	Georgia Southern
9. Dell Pettus	Sparkman (Harvest, AL)	CB	5-1	174	Troy
10. Chandler Fields	Archbishop Rummel (Metairie, LA)	QB	5-11	182	Louisiana

TOP 50 CLASSES

1. Alabama
2. Georgia
3. Texas
4. Texas A&M
5. LSU
6. Oklahoma
7. Oregon
8. Michigan
9. Florida
10. Clemson
11. Auburn
12. Tennessee
13. Penn State
14. Ohio State
15. Notre Dame
16. Washington
17. South Carolina
18. Florida State
19. Nebraska
20. USC
21. Stanford
22. Ole Miss
23. Arkansas
24. Mississippi State
25. Purdue
26. Virginia Tech
27. Wisconsin
28. Miami (Fla.)
29. NC State
30. Michigan State
31. Arizona State
32. North Carolina
33. TCU
34. Kentucky
35. Baylor
36. Missouri
37. Oklahoma State
38. Indiana
39. Virginia
40. Iowa
41. UCLA
42. California
43. Minnesota
44. Colorado
45. Utah
46. Maryland
47. Duke
48. Iowa State
49. West Virginia
50. Boise State

TEAM RANKINGS

ACC

1. Clemson
2. Florida State
3. Virginia Tech
4. Miami
5. NC State
6. North Carolina
7. Virginia
8. Duke
9. Georgia Tech
10. Syracuse
11. Wake Forest
12. Pittsburgh
13. Boston College
14. Louisville

Big 12

1 Texas
2. Oklahoma
3. TCU
4. Baylor
5. Oklahoma State
6. Iowa State
7. West Virginia
8. Kansas State
9. Kansas
10. Texas Tech

Big Ten

1. Michigan
2. Penn State
3. Ohio State
4. Nebraska
5. Purdue
6. Wisconsin
7. Michigan State
8. Indiana
9. Iowa
10. Minnesota
11. Maryland
12. Northwestern
13. Illinois
14. Rutgers

Pac-12

1. Oregon
2. Washington
3. USC
4. Stanford
5. Arizona State
6. UCLA
7. California
8. Colorado
9. Utah
10. Arizona
11. Washington State
12. Oregon State

SEC

1. Alabama
2. Georgia
3. Texas A&M
4. LSU
5. Florida
6. Auburn
7. Tennessee
8. South Carolina
9. Ole Miss
10. Arkansas
11. Mississippi State
12. Kentucky
13. Missouri
14. Vanderbilt

AAC

1. UCF
2. Memphis
3. SMU
4. East Carolina
5. USF
6. Cincinnati
7. Houston
8. Tulane
9. Temple
10. Tulsa
11. Navy
12. Connecticut

Conference USA

1. Florida Atlantic
2. Marshall
3. North Texas
4. Southern Miss
5. Middle Tennessee
6. UAB
7. FIU
8. Louisiana Tech
9. Western Kentucky
10. UTSA
11. UTEP
12. Old Dominion
13. Rice
14. Charlotte

MAC

1. Toledo
2. Western Michigan
3. Miami
4. Ohio
5. Central Michigan
6. Buffalo
7. Kent State
8. Northern Illinois
9. Akron
10. Eastern Michigan
11. Ball State
12. Bowling Green

MW

1. Boise State
2. Colorado State
3. Fresno State
4. Utah State
5. Nevada
6. San Diego State
7. Wyoming
8. Air Force
9. UNLV
10. New Mexico
11. San Jose State
12. Hawaii

Sun Belt

1. Louisiana
2. Troy
3. Arkansas State
4. Appalachian State
5. Georgia State
6. Georgia Southern
7. South Alabama
8. Coastal Carolina
9. ULM
10. Texas State

Alfano, Uiagalelei: AP

TOP 100 RISING SENIORS 2020 //Recruiting

1. Bryan Bresee	Damascus (Damascus, MD)	DT	6-5	290
2. Zachary Evans	North Shore (Houston, TX)	RB	5-11	200
3. Justin Flowe	Upland (Upland, CA)	LB	6-2	225
4. Paris Johnson Jr.	St. Xavier (Cincinnati, OH)	OT	6-8	295
5. Julian Fleming	Southern Columbia (Catawissa, PA)	WR	6-3	210
6. DJ Uiagalelei	St. John Bosco (Bellflower, CA)	QB	6-4	240
7. Sav'ell Smalls	Kennedy Catholic (Burien, WA)	LB	6-3	230
8. Jordan Burch	Hammond School (Columbia, SC)	DE	6-5	250
9. Elias Ricks	Mater Dei (Santa Ana, CA)	CB	6-2	188
10. Arik Gilbert	Marietta (Marietta, GA)	ATH	6-5	253
11. Myles Murphy	Hillgrove (Powder Springs, GA)	DE	6-5	255
12. Kelee Ringo	Saguaro (Scottsdale, AZ)	CB	6-2	205
13. Mekhail Sherman	St. John's College HS (Washington, DC)	LB	6-3	234
14. Chris Braswell	St. Frances Academy (Baltimore, MD)	DE	6-3	220
15. Kendall Milton	Buchanan (Clovis, CA)	RB	6-2	220
16. Desmond Evans	Lee County (Sanford, NC)	DE	6-6	238
17. Rakim Jarrett	St. John's College HS (Washington, DC)	WR	6-0	182
18. Darnell Washington	Desert Pines (Las Vegas, NV)	ATH	6-8	248
19. Broderick Jones	Lithonia (Lithonia, GA)	OT	6-5	275
20. Demarkcus Bowman	Lakeland (Lakeland, FL)	RB	5-11	186
21. Jase McClellan	Aledo (Aledo, TX)	RB	5-10	201
22. Justin Rogers	Oak Park (Oak Park, MI)	OG	6-3	311
23. Myles Hinton	Greater Atlanta Christian (Norcross, GA)	OT	6-6	308
24. Demond Demas	Tomball (Tomball, TX)	WR	6-3	182
25. Johnny Wilson	Calabasas (Calabasas, CA)	WR	6-6	220
26. Bijan Robinson	Salpointe Catholic (Tucson, AZ)	RB	6-0	200
27. Bryce Young	Mater Dei (Santa Ana, CA)	QB	6-0	176
28. Reggie Grimes	Mount Juliet (Mount Juliet, TN)	DE	6-4	225
29. MarShawn Lloyd	DeMatha Catholic (Hyattsville, MD)	RB	5-9	206
30. Antoine Sampah	Woodbridge (Woodbridge, VA)	LB	6-3	220
31. Chris Tyree	Thomas Dale (Chester, VA)	RB	5-9	178
32. Marcus Rosemy	St. Thomas Aquinas (Fort Lauderdale, FL)	WR	6-2	187
33. Fred Davis II	Trinity Christian Academy (Jacksonville, FL)	CB	6-1	182
34. Jordan Johnson	DeSmet (St. Louis, MO)	WR	6-2	180
35. Jermaine Burton	Calabasas (Calabasas, CA)	WR	6-1	193
36. Drew Sanders	Ryan (Denton, TX)	ATH	6-5	215
37. Clark Phillips III	La Habra (La Habra, CA)	CB	5-11	178
38. Kayshon Boutte	Westgate (New Iberia, LA)	WR	5-10	175
39. Tosh Baker	Pinnacle (Phoenix, AZ)	OT	6-8	275
40. McKinnley Jackson	George County (Lucedale, MS)	DT	6-2	324
41. Darrion Henry	Princeton (Cincinnati, OH)	DE	6-6	260
42. RJ Mickens	Southlake Carroll (Southlake, TX)	S	6-1	188
43. Don Chaney Jr.	Belen Jesuit Prep (Miami, FL)	RB	5-11	195
44. Jalen McMillan	San Joaquin Memorial (Fresno, CA)	WR	6-2	181
45. Ja'Quinden Jackson	Duncanville (Duncanville, TX)	ATH	6-2	219
46. Tank Bigsby	Callaway (Hogansville, GA)	RB	6-0	195
47. Avantae Williams	DeLand (DeLand, FL)	S	5-11	170
48. Leonard Manuel	Vanguard (Ocala, FL)	WR	6-4	200
49. Demonte Capehart	Hartsville (Hartsville, SC)	DT	6-5	270
50. Jalen Berger	Don Bosco Prep (Ramsey, NJ)	ATH	6-0	187
51. Luke Wypler	St. Joseph Regional (Montvale, NJ)	C	6-4	285
52. Tate Ratledge	Darlington School (Rome, GA)	OT	6-7	306
53. Jay Butterfield	Liberty (Brentwood, CA)	QB	6-6	180
54. Gary Bryant Jr.	Centennial (Corona, CA)	WR	5-10	160
55. Myles Murao	Mater Dei (Santa Ana, CA)	OG	6-3	270
56. Turner Corcoran	Lawrence Free State (Lawrence, KS)	OT	6-6	280
57. Andrew Gentry	Columbine (Littleton, CO)	OT	6-8	310
58. Phillip Webb	Lanier (Buford, GA)	LB	6-4	210
59. Chad Lindberg	Clear Creek (League City, TX)	OT	6-6	306
60. Jaylon Jones	Steele (Cibolo, TX)	CB	6-2	190
61. Chris Thompson Jr.	Duncanville (Duncanville, TX)	S	6-2	195
62. Carson Beck	Mandarin (Jacksonville, FL)	QB	6-5	226
63. Mitchell Mayes	Leesville Road (Raleigh, NC)	OG	6-4	306
64. Jay Hardy	McCallie School (Chattanooga, TN)	DE	6-5	265
65. Jack Miller	Chaparral (Scottsdale, AZ)	QB	6-4	210
66. Mookie Cooper	Trinity Catholic (St. Louis, MO)	WR	5-11	178
67. Gee Scott Jr.	Eastside Catholic (Sammamish, WA)	WR	6-3	211
68. Kobe Hudson	Troup County (LaGrange, GA)	WR	6-1	186
69. Lathan Ransom	Salpointe Catholic (Tucson, AZ)	S	6-2	200
70. Daniyel Ngata	Folsom (Folsom, CA)	RB	5-9	180
71. Vernon Broughton	Cy Ridge (Houston, TX)	DT	6-5	280
72. Troy Omeire	Fort Bend Austin (Sugar Land, TX)	WR	6-4	217
73. Henry Gray	Miami Central (Miami, FL)	CB	6-0	172
74. Hudson Card	Lake Travis (Austin, TX)	QB	6-3	179
75. Andrew Raym	Broken Arrow (Broken Arrow, OK)	OG	6-5	300
76. Omari Thomas	Briarcrest Christian (Memphis, TN)	DT	6-5	295
77. A.J. Henning	Lincoln-Way East (Frankfort, IL)	WR	5-10	175
78. Noah Sewell	Orem (Orem, UT)	ATH	6-2	266
79. Bryan Robinson	Palm Beach Central (West Palm Beach, FL)	WR	6-1	179
80. Harrison Bailey	Marietta (Marietta, GA)	QB	6-4	220
81. Darin Turner	Memphis Central (Memphis, TN)	WR	6-4	205
82. Jayson Jones	Calera (Calera, AL)	DT	6-7	340
83. Trey Wedig	Kettle Moraine (Wales, WI)	OT	6-7	301
84. Tre Williams	St. John's College HS (Washington, DC)	DT	6-2	295
85. Paul Tchio	Milton (Alpharetta, GA)	OG	6-5	325
86. Enzo Jennings	Oak Park (Oak Park, MI)	ATH	6-1	185
87. Keyvone Lee	Superior Collegiate Academy (Clearwater, FL)	RB	6-0	216
88. E.J. Williams	Central (Phenix City, AL)	WR	6-4	192
89. Nathan Anderson	Reedy (Frisco, TX)	OT	6-5	262
90. Gervon Dexter	Lake Wales (Lake Wales, FL)	DT	6-7	276
91. Jamil Burroughs	McEachern (Powder Springs, GA)	DT	6-2	280
92. Zavier Betts	Bellevue West (Bellevue, NE)	WR	6-2	189
93. Porter Rooks	Myers Park (Charlotte, NC)	WR	6-1	185
94. Keshawn Lawrence	Ensworth (Nashville, TN)	S	6-3	192
95. Kevin Pyne	Milford (Millis, MA)	OT	6-7	275
96. Vito Tisdale	Bowling Green (Bowling Green, KY)	S	6-1	185
97. EJ Smith	Jesuit (Dallas, TX)	RB	5-11	198
98. Malachi Moore	Hewitt-Trussville (Trussville, AL)	CB	6-1	180
99. Ashaad Clayton	Warren Easton (New Orleans, LA)	RB	6-0	200
100. Zykeivous Walker	Schley County (Ellaville, GA)	DE	6-4	255

2019 FBS Schedules

ACC

BOSTON COLL. (7-5, 4-4)
Chestnut Hill, MA
Aug. 31 Virginia Tech
Sept. 7 Richmond
Sept. 13 Kansas
Sept. 21 at Rutgers
Sept. 28 Wake Forest
Oct. 5 at Louisville
Oct. 19 NC State
Oct. 26 at Clemson
Nov. 2 at Syracuse
Nov. 9 Florida State
Nov. 23 at Notre Dame
Nov. 30 at Pittsburgh

CLEMSON (15-0, 8-0)
Clemson, SC
Aug. 29 Georgia Tech
Sept. 7 Texas A&M
Sept. 14 at Syracuse
Sept. 21 Charlotte
Sept. 28 at North Carolina
Oct. 12 Florida State
Oct. 19 at Louisville
Oct. 26 Boston College
Nov. 2 Wofford
Nov. 9 at NC State
Nov. 16 Wake Forest
Nov. 30 at South Carolina

DUKE (8-5, 3-5)
Durham, NC
Aug. 31 vs. Alabama #
Sept. 7 North Carolina A&T
Sept. 14 at Middle Tennessee
Sept. 27 at Virginia Tech
Oct. 5 Pittsburgh
Oct. 12 Georgia Tech
Oct. 19 at Virginia
Oct. 26 at North Carolina
Nov. 9 Notre Dame
Nov. 16 Syracuse
Nov. 23 at Wake Forest
Nov. 30 Miami
#Atlanta, GA

FLORIDA STATE (5-7, 3-5)
Tallahassee, FL
Aug. 31 vs. Boise State #
Sept. 7 ULM
Sept. 14 at Virginia
Sept. 21 Louisville
Sept. 28 NC State
Oct. 12 at Clemson
Oct. 19 at Wake Forest
Oct. 26 Syracuse
Nov. 2 Miami
Nov. 9 at Boston College
Nov. 16 Alabama State
Nov. 30 at Florida
#Jacksonville, FL

GEORGIA TECH (7-6, 5-3)
Atlanta, GA
Aug. 29 at Clemson
Sept. 7 South Florida
Sept. 14 The Citadel
Sept. 28 at Temple
Oct. 5 North Carolina
Oct. 12 at Duke
Oct. 19 at Miami
Nov. 2 Pittsburgh
Nov. 9 at Virginia
Nov. 16 Virginia Tech
Nov. 21 NC State
Nov. 30 Georgia

LOUISVILLE (2-10, 0-8)
Louisville, KY
Sept. 2 Notre Dame
Sept. 7 Eastern Kentucky
Sept. 14 vs. Western Kentucky #
Sept. 21 at Florida State
Oct. 5 Boston College
Oct. 12 at Wake Forest
Oct. 19 Clemson
Oct. 26 Virginia
Nov. 9 at Miami
Nov. 16 at NC State
Nov. 23 Syracuse
Nov. 30 at Kentucky
#Nashville, TN

MIAMI (7-6, 4-4)
Coral Gables, FL
Aug. 24 vs. Florida #
Sept. 7 at North Carolina
Sept. 14 Bethune-Cookman
Sept. 21 Central Michigan
Oct. 5 Virginia Tech
Oct. 11 Virginia
Oct. 19 Georgia Tech
Oct. 26 at Pittsburgh
Nov. 2 at Florida State
Nov. 9 Louisville
Nov. 23 at FIU
Nov. 30 at Duke
#Orlando, FL

NORTH CAROLINA (2-9, 1-7)
Chapel Hill, NC
Aug. 31 vs. South Carolina #
Sept. 7 Miami
Sept. 12 at Wake Forest
Sept. 21 Appalachian State
Sept. 28 Clemson
Oct. 5 at Georgia Tech
Oct. 19 at Virginia Tech
Oct. 26 Duke
Nov. 2 Virginia
Nov. 14 at Pittsburgh
Nov. 23 Mercer
Nov. 30 at NC State
#Charlotte, NC

NC STATE (9-4, 5-3)
Raleigh, NC
Aug. 31 East Carolina
Sept. 7 Western Carolina
Sept. 14 at West Virginia
Sept. 21 Ball State
Sept. 28 at Florida State
Oct. 10 Syracuse
Oct. 19 at Boston College
Nov. 2 at Wake Forest
Nov. 9 Clemson
Nov. 16 Louisville
Nov. 21 at Georgia Tech
Nov. 30 North Carolina

PITTSBURGH (7-7, 6-2)
Pittsburgh, PA
Aug. 31 Virginia
Sept. 7 Ohio
Sept. 14 at Penn State
Sept. 21 UCF
Sept. 28 Delaware
Oct. 5 at Duke
Oct. 18 at Syracuse
Oct. 26 Miami
Nov. 2 at Georgia Tech
Nov. 14 North Carolina
Nov. 23 at Virginia Tech
Nov. 30 Boston College

SYRACUSE (10-3, 6-2)
Syracuse, NY
Aug. 31 at Liberty
Sept. 7 at Maryland
Sept. 14 Clemson
Sept. 21 Western Michigan
Sept. 28 Holy Cross
Oct. 10 at NC State
Oct. 18 Pittsburgh
Oct. 26 at Florida State
Nov. 2 Boston College
Nov. 16 at Duke
Nov. 23 at Louisville
Nov. 30 Wake Forest

VIRGINIA (8-5, 4-4)
Charlottesville, VA
Aug. 31 at Pittsburgh
Sept. 6 William & Mary
Sept. 14 Florida State
Sept. 21 Old Dominion
Sept. 28 at Notre Dame
Oct. 11 at Miami
Oct. 19 Duke
Oct. 26 at Louisville
Nov. 2 at North Carolina
Nov. 9 Georgia Tech
Nov. 23 Liberty
Nov. 29 Virginia Tech

VIRGINIA TECH (6-7, 4-4)
Blacksburg, VA
Aug. 31 at Boston College
Sept. 7 Old Dominion
Sept. 14 Furman
Sept. 27 Duke
Oct. 5 at Miami
Oct. 12 Rhode Island
Oct. 19 North Carolina
Nov. 2 at Notre Dame
Nov. 9 Wake Forest
Nov. 16 at Georgia Tech
Nov. 23 Pittsburgh
Nov. 29 at Virginia

WAKE FOREST (7-6, 3-5)
Winston-Salem, NC
Aug. 30 Utah State
Sept. 6 at Rice
Sept. 12 North Carolina
Sept. 21 Elon
Sept. 28 at Boston College
Oct. 12 Louisville
Oct. 19 Florida State
Nov. 2 NC State
Nov. 9 at Virginia Tech
Nov. 16 at Clemson
Nov. 23 Duke
Nov. 30 at Syracuse

AMERICAN

CINCINNATI (11-2, 6-2)
Cincinnati, OH
Aug. 29 UCLA
Sept. 7 at Ohio State
Sept. 14 Miami (Ohio)
Sept. 28 at Marshall
Oct. 4 UCF
Oct. 12 at Houston
Oct. 19 Tulsa
Nov. 2 at East Carolina
Nov. 9 Connecticut
Nov. 16 at South Florida
Nov. 23 Temple
Nov. 29 at Memphis

Virginia

Navy

CONNECTICUT (1-11, 0-8)
Storrs, CT
Aug. 29 Wagner
Sept. 7 Illinois
Sept. 21 at Indiana
Sept. 28 at UCF
Oct. 5 South Florida
Oct. 12 at Tulane
Oct. 19 Houston
Oct. 26 at Massachusetts
Nov. 1 Navy
Nov. 9 at Cincinnati
Nov. 23 East Carolina
Nov. 30 at Temple

EAST CAROLINA (3-9, 1-7)
Greenville, NC
Aug. 31 at NC State
Sept. 7 Gardner-Webb
Sept. 14 at Navy
Sept. 21 William & Mary
Sept. 28 at Old Dominion
Oct. 3 Temple
Oct. 19 at UCF
Oct. 26 South Florida
Nov. 2 Cincinnati
Nov. 9 at SMU
Nov. 23 at Connecticut
Nov. 30 Tulsa

HOUSTON (8-5, 5-3)
Houston, TX
Aug. 31 at Oklahoma
Sept. 7 Prairie View A&M
Sept. 13 Washington State #
Sept. 19 at Tulane
Sept. 28 at North Texas
Oct. 12 Cincinnati
Oct. 19 at Connecticut
Oct. 24 SMU
Nov. 2 at UCF
Nov. 16 Memphis
Nov. 23 at Tulsa
Nov. 30 Navy
#NRG Stadium

MEMPHIS (8-6, 5-3)
Memphis, TN
Aug. 31 Ole Miss
Sept. 7 Southern
Sept. 14 at South Alabama
Sept. 26 Navy
Oct. 5 at ULM
Oct. 12 at Temple
Oct. 19 Tulane
Oct. 26 at Tulsa
Nov. 2 SMU
Nov. 16 at Houston
Nov. 23 at South Florida
Nov. 29 Cincinnati

NAVY (3-10, 2-6)
Annapolis, MD
Aug. 31 Holy Cross
Sept. 14 East Carolina
Sept. 26 at Memphis
Oct. 5 Air Force
Oct. 12 at Tulsa
Oct. 19 South Florida
Oct. 26 Tulane
Nov. 1 at Connecticut
Nov. 16 at Notre Dame
Nov. 23 SMU
Nov. 30 at Houston
Dec. 14 vs. Army #
#Philadelphia, PA

SOUTH FLORIDA (7-6, 3-5)
Tampa, FL
Aug. 30 Wisconsin
Sept. 7 at Georgia Tech
Sept. 14 South Carolina State
Sept. 28 SMU
Oct. 5 at Connecticut
Oct. 12 BYU
Oct. 19 at Navy
Oct. 26 at East Carolina
Nov. 7 Temple
Nov. 16 Cincinnati
Nov. 23 Memphis
Nov. 29 at UCF

SMU (5-7, 4-4)
Dallas, TX
Aug. 31 at Arkansas State
Sept. 7 North Texas
Sept. 14 Texas State
Sept. 21 at TCU
Sept. 28 at South Florida
Oct. 5 Tulsa
Oct. 19 Temple
Oct. 24 at Houston
Nov. 2 at Memphis
Nov. 9 East Carolina
Nov. 23 at Navy
Nov. 30 Tulane

Virginia: Walter G. Arce Sr.; Navy: Navy Athletics

Temple

Illinois

Michigan

Rutgers

TEMPLE (8-5, 7-1)
Philadelphia, PA
Aug. 31 Bucknell
Sept. 14 Maryland
Sept. 21 at Buffalo
Sept. 28 Georgia Tech
Oct. 3 at East Carolina
Oct. 12 Memphis
Oct. 19 at SMU
Oct. 26 UCF
Nov. 7 at South Florida
Nov. 16 Tulane
Nov. 23 at Cincinnati
Nov. 30 Connecticut

TULANE (7-6, 5-3)
New Orleans, LA
Aug. 29 FIU
Sept. 7 at Auburn
Sept. 14 Missouri State
Sept. 19 Houston
Oct. 5 at Army
Oct. 12 Connecticut
Oct. 19 at Memphis
Oct. 26 at Navy
Nov. 2 Tulsa
Nov. 16 at Temple
Nov. 23 UCF
Nov. 30 at SMU

TULSA (3-9, 2-6)
Tulsa, OK
Aug. 30 at Michigan State
Sept. 7 at San Jose State
Sept. 14 Oklahoma State
Sept. 21 Wyoming
Oct. 5 at SMU
Oct. 12 Navy
Oct. 19 at Cincinnati
Oct. 26 Memphis
Nov. 2 at Tulane
Nov. 8 UCF
Nov. 23 Houston
Nov. 30 at East Carolina

UCF (12-1, 8-0)
Orlando, FL
Aug. 29 Florida A&M
Sept. 7 at Florida Atlantic
Sept. 14 Stanford
Sept. 21 at Pittsburgh
Sept. 28 Connecticut
Oct. 4 at Cincinnati
Oct. 19 East Carolina
Oct. 26 at Temple
Nov. 2 Houston
Nov. 8 at Tulsa
Nov. 23 at Tulane
Nov. 29 South Florida

BIG TEN

ILLINOIS (4-8, 2-7)
Champaign, IL
Aug. 31 Akron
Sept. 7 at Connecticut
Sept. 14 Eastern Michigan
Sept. 21 Nebraska
Oct. 5 at Minnesota
Oct. 12 Michigan
Oct. 19 Wisconsin
Oct. 26 at Purdue
Nov. 2 Rutgers
Nov. 9 at Michigan State
Nov. 23 at Iowa
Nov. 30 Northwestern

INDIANA (5-7, 2-7)
Bloomington, IN
Aug. 31 vs. Ball State #
Sept. 7 Eastern Illinois
Sept. 14 Ohio State
Sept. 21 Connecticut
Sept. 28 at Michigan State
Oct. 12 Rutgers
Oct. 19 at Maryland
Oct. 26 at Nebraska
Nov. 2 Northwestern
Nov. 16 at Penn State
Nov. 23 Michigan
Nov. 30 at Purdue
#Indianapolis, IN

IOWA (9-4, 5-4)
Iowa City, IA
Aug. 31 Miami (Ohio)
Sept. 7 Rutgers
Sept. 14 at Iowa State
Sept. 28 Middle Tennessee
Oct. 5 at Michigan
Oct. 12 Penn State
Oct. 19 Purdue
Oct. 26 at Northwestern
Nov. 9 at Wisconsin
Nov. 16 Minnesota
Nov. 23 Illinois
Nov. 29 at Nebraska

MARYLAND (5-7, 3-6)
College Park, MD
Aug. 31 Howard
Sept. 7 Syracuse
Sept. 14 at Temple
Sept. 27 Penn State
Oct. 5 at Rutgers
Oct. 12 at Purdue
Oct. 19 Indiana
Oct. 26 at Minnesota
Nov. 2 Michigan
Nov. 9 at Ohio State
Nov. 23 Nebraska
Nov. 30 at Michigan State

MICHIGAN (10-3, 8-1)
Ann Arbor, MI
Aug. 31 Middle Tennessee
Sept. 7 Army
Sept. 21 at Wisconsin
Sept. 28 Rutgers
Oct. 5 Iowa
Oct. 12 at Illinois
Oct. 19 at Penn State
Oct. 26 Notre Dame
Nov. 2 at Maryland
Nov. 16 Michigan State
Nov. 23 at Indiana
Nov. 30 Ohio State

MICHIGAN STATE (7-6, 5-4)
East Lansing, MI
Aug. 30 Tulsa
Sept. 7 Western Michigan
Sept. 14 Arizona State
Sept. 21 at Northwestern
Sept. 28 Indiana
Oct. 5 at Ohio State
Oct. 12 at Wisconsin
Oct. 26 Penn State
Nov. 9 Illinois
Nov. 16 at Michigan
Nov. 23 at Rutgers
Nov. 30 Maryland

MINNESOTA (7-6, 3-6)
Minneapolis, MN
Aug. 29 South Dakota State
Sept. 7 at Fresno State
Sept. 14 Georgia Southern
Sept. 28 at Purdue
Oct. 5 Illinois
Oct. 12 Nebraska
Oct. 19 at Rutgers
Oct. 26 Maryland
Nov. 9 Penn State
Nov. 16 at Iowa
Nov. 23 at Northwestern
Nov. 30 Wisconsin

NEBRASKA (4-8, 3-6)
Lincoln, NE
Aug. 31 South Alabama
Sept. 7 at Colorado
Sept. 14 Northern Illinois
Sept. 21 at Illinois
Sept. 28 Ohio State
Oct. 5 Northwestern
Oct. 12 at Minnesota
Oct. 26 Indiana
Nov. 2 at Purdue
Nov. 16 Wisconsin
Nov. 23 at Maryland
Nov. 29 Iowa

NORTHWESTERN (9-5, 8-1)
Evanston, IL
Aug. 31 at Stanford
Sept. 14 UNLV
Sept. 21 Michigan State
Sept. 28 at Wisconsin
Oct. 5 at Nebraska
Oct. 18 Ohio State
Oct. 26 Iowa
Nov. 2 at Indiana
Nov. 9 Purdue
Nov. 16 Massachusetts
Nov. 23 Minnesota
Nov. 30 at Illinois

OHIO STATE (13-1, 8-1)
Columbus, OH
Aug. 31 Florida Atlantic
Sept. 7 Cincinnati
Sept. 14 at Indiana
Sept. 21 Miami (Ohio)
Sept. 28 at Nebraska
Oct. 5 Michigan State
Oct. 18 at Northwestern
Oct. 26 Wisconsin
Nov. 9 Maryland
Nov. 16 at Rutgers
Nov. 23 Penn State
Nov. 30 at Michigan

PENN STATE (9-4, 6-3)
University Park, PA
Aug. 31 Idaho
Sept. 7 Buffalo
Sept. 14 Pittsburgh
Sept. 27 at Maryland
Oct. 5 Purdue
Oct. 12 at Iowa
Oct. 19 Michigan
Oct. 26 at Michigan State
Nov. 9 at Minnesota
Nov. 16 Indiana
Nov. 23 at Ohio State
Nov. 30 Rutgers

PURDUE (6-7, 5-4)
West Lafayette, IN
Aug. 30 at Nevada
Sept. 7 Vanderbilt
Sept. 14 TCU
Sept. 28 Minnesota
Oct. 5 at Penn State
Oct. 12 Maryland
Oct. 19 at Iowa
Oct. 26 Illinois
Nov. 2 Nebraska
Nov. 9 at Northwestern
Nov. 23 at Wisconsin
Nov. 30 Indiana

RUTGERS (1-11, 0-9)
New Brunswick, NJ
Aug. 30 Massachusetts
Sept. 7 at Iowa
Sept. 21 Boston College
Sept. 28 at Michigan
Oct. 5 Maryland
Oct. 12 at Indiana
Oct. 19 Minnesota
Oct. 26 Liberty
Nov. 2 at Illinois
Nov. 16 Ohio State
Nov. 23 Michigan State
Nov. 30 at Penn State

WISCONSIN (8-5, 5-4)
Madison, WI
Aug. 30 at South Florida
Sept. 7 Central Michigan
Sept. 21 Michigan
Sept. 28 Northwestern
Oct. 5 Kent State
Oct. 12 Michigan State
Oct. 19 at Illinois
Oct. 26 at Ohio State
Nov. 9 Iowa
Nov. 16 at Nebraska
Nov. 23 Purdue
Nov. 30 at Minnesota

BIG 12

BAYLOR (7-6, 4-5)
Waco, TX
Aug. 31 Stephen F. Austin
Sept. 7 UTSA
Sept. 21 at Rice
Sept. 28 Iowa State
Oct. 5 at Kansas State
Oct. 12 Texas Tech
Oct. 19 at Oklahoma State
Oct. 31 West Virginia
Nov. 9 at TCU
Nov. 16 Oklahoma
Nov. 23 Texas
Nov. 30 at Kansas

IOWA STATE (8-5, 6-3)
Ames, IA
Aug. 31 Northern Iowa
Sept. 14 Iowa
Sept. 21 ULM
Sept. 28 at Baylor
Oct. 5 TCU
Oct. 12 at West Virginia
Oct. 19 at Texas Tech
Oct. 26 Oklahoma State
Nov. 9 at Oklahoma
Nov. 16 Texas
Nov. 23 Kansas
Nov. 30 at Kansas State

Temple: Temple Athletics; Illinois: Joe Robbins; Michigan: Bruce Schwartzman; Rutgers: Harrison McClary

2019 FBS Schedules

Middle Tennessee

KANSAS (3-9, 1-8)
Lawrence, KS
Aug. 31 Indiana State
Sept. 7 Coastal Carolina
Sept. 13 at Boston College
Sept. 21 West Virginia
Sept. 28 at TCU
Oct. 5 Oklahoma
Oct. 19 at Texas
Oct. 26 Texas Tech
Nov. 2 Kansas State
Nov. 16 at Oklahoma State
Nov. 23 at Iowa State
Nov. 30 Baylor

KANSAS STATE (5-7, 3-6)
Manhattan, KS
Aug. 31 Nicholls
Sept. 7 Bowling Green
Sept. 14 at Mississippi State
Sept. 28 at Oklahoma State
Oct. 5 Baylor
Oct. 19 TCU
Oct. 26 Oklahoma
Nov. 2 at Kansas
Nov. 9 at Texas
Nov. 16 West Virginia
Nov. 23 at Texas Tech
Nov. 30 Iowa State

OKLAHOMA (12-2, 8-1)
Norman, OK
Aug. 31 Houston
Sept. 7 South Dakota
Sept. 14 at UCLA
Sept. 28 Texas Tech
Oct. 5 at Kansas
Oct. 12 vs. Texas #
Oct. 19 West Virginia
Oct. 26 at Kansas State
Nov. 9 Iowa State
Nov. 16 at Baylor
Nov. 23 TCU
Nov. 30 at Oklahoma State
#Dallas, TX

OKLAHOMA STATE (7-6, 3-6)
Stillwater, OK
Aug. 30 at Oregon State
Sept. 7 McNeese
Sept. 14 at Tulsa
Sept. 21 at Texas
Sept. 28 Kansas State
Oct. 5 at Texas Tech
Oct. 19 Baylor
Oct. 26 at Iowa State
Nov. 2 TCU
Nov. 16 Kansas
Nov. 23 at West Virginia
Nov. 30 Oklahoma

TEXAS (10-4, 7-2)
Austin, TX
Aug. 31 Louisiana Tech
Sept. 7 LSU
Sept. 14 at Rice #
Sept. 21 Oklahoma State
Oct. 5 at West Virginia
Oct. 12 vs. Oklahoma %
Oct. 19 Kansas
Oct. 26 at TCU
Nov. 9 Kansas State
Nov. 16 at Iowa State
Nov. 23 at Baylor
Nov. 29 Texas Tech
#NRG Stadium %Dallas, TX

TCU (7-6, 3-5)
Fort Worth, TX
Aug. 31 Arkansas-Pine Bluff
Sept. 14 at Purdue
Sept. 21 SMU
Sept. 28 Kansas
Oct. 5 at Iowa State
Oct. 19 at Kansas State
Oct. 26 Texas
Nov. 2 at Oklahoma State
Nov. 9 Baylor
Nov. 16 at Texas Tech
Nov. 23 at Oklahoma
Nov. 30 West Virginia

TEXAS TECH (5-7, 3-6)
Lubbock, TX
Aug. 31 Montana State
Sept. 7 UTEP
Sept. 14 at Arizona
Sept. 28 at Oklahoma
Oct. 5 Oklahoma State
Oct. 12 at Baylor
Oct. 19 Iowa State
Oct. 26 at Kansas
Nov. 9 at West Virginia
Nov. 16 TCU
Nov. 23 Kansas State
Nov. 29 at Texas

WEST VIRGINIA (8-4, 6-3)
Morgantown, WV
Aug. 31 James Madison
Sept. 7 at Missouri
Sept. 14 NC State
Sept. 21 at Kansas
Oct. 5 Texas
Oct. 12 Iowa State
Oct. 19 at Oklahoma
Oct. 31 at Baylor
Nov. 9 Texas Tech
Nov. 16 at Kansas State
Nov. 23 Oklahoma State
Nov. 30 at TCU

C-USA

CHARLOTTE (5-7, 4-4)
Charlotte, NC
Aug. 31 Gardner-Webb
Sept. 7 at Appalachian State
Sept. 14 Massachusetts
Sept. 21 at Clemson
Sept. 28 Florida Atlantic
Oct. 12 at FIU
Oct. 19 at Western Kentucky
Oct. 26 North Texas
Nov. 2 Middle Tennessee
Nov. 9 at UTEP
Nov. 23 Marshall
Nov. 30 at Old Dominion

FIU (9-4, 6-2)
Miami, FL
Aug. 29 at Tulane
Sept. 7 Western Kentucky
Sept. 14 New Hampshire
Sept. 20 at Louisiana Tech
Oct. 5 Massachusetts
Oct. 12 Charlotte
Oct. 19 UTEP
Oct. 26 at Middle Tennessee
Nov. 2 Old Dominion
Nov. 9 at Florida Atlantic
Nov. 23 Miami
Nov. 30 at Marshall

FLORIDA ATLANTIC (5-7, 3-5)
Boca Raton, FL
Aug. 31 at Ohio State
Sept. 7 UCF
Sept. 14 at Ball State
Sept. 21 Wagner
Sept. 28 at Charlotte
Oct. 12 Middle Tennessee
Oct. 18 Marshall
Oct. 26 at Old Dominion
Nov. 2 at Western Kentucky
Nov. 9 FIU
Nov. 23 at UTSA
Nov. 30 Southern Miss

LOUISIANA TECH (8-5, 5-3)
Ruston, LA
Aug. 31 at Texas
Sept. 7 Grambling
Sept. 14 at Bowling Green
Sept. 20 FIU
Sept. 28 at Rice
Oct. 12 Massachusetts
Oct. 19 Southern Miss
Oct. 26 at UTEP
Nov. 9 North Texas
Nov. 15 at Marshall
Nov. 23 at UAB
Nov. 30 UTSA

MARSHALL (9-4, 6-2)
Huntington, WV
Aug. 31 VMI
Sept. 6 at Boise State
Sept. 14 Ohio
Sept. 28 Cincinnati
Oct. 5 at Middle Tennessee
Oct. 12 Old Dominion
Oct. 18 at Florida Atlantic
Oct. 26 Western Kentucky
Nov. 2 at Rice
Nov. 15 Louisiana Tech
Nov. 23 at Charlotte
Nov. 30 FIU

MIDDLE TENNESSEE (8-6, 7-1)
Murfreesboro, TN
Aug. 31 at Michigan
Sept. 7 Tennessee State
Sept. 14 Duke
Sept. 28 at Iowa
Oct. 5 Marshall
Oct. 12 at Florida Atlantic
Oct. 19 at North Texas
Oct. 26 FIU
Nov. 2 at Charlotte
Nov. 16 Rice
Nov. 23 Old Dominion
Nov. 30 at Western Kentucky

NORTH TEXAS (9-4, 5-3)
Denton, TX
Aug. 31 Abilene Christian
Sept. 7 at SMU
Sept. 14 at California
Sept. 21 UTSA
Sept. 28 Houston
Oct. 12 at Southern Miss
Oct. 19 Middle Tennessee
Oct. 26 at Charlotte
Nov. 2 UTEP
Nov. 9 at Louisiana Tech
Nov. 23 at Rice
Nov. 30 UAB

OLD DOMINION (4-8, 2-6)
Norfolk, VA
Aug. 31 Norfolk State
Sept. 7 at Virginia Tech
Sept. 21 at Virginia
Sept. 28 East Carolina
Oct. 5 Western Kentucky
Oct. 12 at Marshall
Oct. 19 at UAB
Oct. 26 Florida Atlantic
Nov. 2 at FIU
Nov. 9 UTSA
Nov. 23 at Middle Tennessee
Nov. 30 Charlotte

RICE (2-10, 1-7)
Houston, TX
Aug. 30 at Army
Sept. 6 Wake Forest
Sept. 14 Texas #
Sept. 21 Baylor
Sept. 28 Louisiana Tech
Oct. 5 at UAB
Oct. 19 at UTSA
Oct. 26 Southern Miss
Nov. 2 Marshall
Nov. 16 at Middle Tennessee
Nov. 23 North Texas
Nov. 30 at UTEP
#NRG Stadium

SOUTHERN MISS (6-5, 5-3)
Hattiesburg, MS
Aug. 31 Alcorn State
Sept. 7 at Mississippi State
Sept. 14 at Troy
Sept. 21 at Alabama
Sept. 28 UTEP
Oct. 12 North Texas
Oct. 19 at Louisiana Tech
Oct. 26 at Rice
Nov. 9 UAB
Nov. 16 at UTSA
Nov. 23 Western Kentucky
Nov. 30 at Florida Atlantic

UAB (11-3, 7-1)
Birmingham, AL
Sept. 7 at Akron
Sept. 21 South Alabama
Sept. 28 at Western Kentucky
Oct. 5 Rice
Oct. 12 at UTSA
Oct. 19 Old Dominion
Nov. 2 at Tennessee
Nov. 9 at Southern Miss
Nov. 16 UTEP
Nov. 23 Louisiana Tech
Nov. 30 at North Texas

UTEP (1-11, 1-7)
El Paso, TX
Aug. 31 Houston Baptist
Sept. 7 at Texas Tech
Sept. 21 Nevada
Sept. 28 at Southern Miss
Oct. 5 UTSA
Oct. 19 at FIU
Oct. 26 Louisiana Tech
Nov. 2 at North Texas
Nov. 9 Charlotte
Nov. 16 at UAB
Nov. 23 at New Mexico State
Nov. 30 Rice

UTSA (3-9, 2-6)
San Antonio, TX
Aug. 31 Incarnate Word
Sept. 7 at Baylor
Sept. 14 Army
Sept. 21 at North Texas
Oct. 5 at UTEP
Oct. 12 UAB
Oct. 19 Rice
Nov. 2 at Texas A&M
Nov. 9 at Old Dominion
Nov. 16 Southern Miss
Nov. 23 Florida Atlantic
Nov. 30 at Louisiana Tech

WESTERN KENTUCKY (3-9, 2-6)
Bowling Green, KY
Aug. 31 Central Arkansas
Sept. 7 at FIU
Sept. 14 vs. Louisville #
Sept. 28 UAB
Oct. 5 at Old Dominion
Oct. 12 Army
Oct. 19 Charlotte
Oct. 26 at Marshall
Nov. 2 Florida Atlantic
Nov. 9 at Arkansas
Nov. 23 at Southern Miss
Nov. 30 Middle Tennessee
#Nashville, TN

Western Kentucky

Akron

Central Michigan

Hawaii

MAC

AKRON (4-8, 2-6)
Akron, OH
Aug. 31 at Illinois
Sept. 7 UAB
Sept. 14 at Central Michigan
Sept. 21 Troy
Sept. 28 at Massachusetts
Oct. 12 Kent State
Oct. 19 Buffalo
Oct. 26 at Northern Illinois
Nov. 2 at Bowling Green
Nov. 12 Eastern Michigan
Nov. 20 at Miami (Ohio)
Nov. 26 Ohio

BALL STATE (4-8, 3-5)
Muncie, IN
Aug. 31 vs. Indiana #
Sept. 7 Fordham
Sept. 14 Florida Atlantic
Sept. 21 at NC State
Oct. 5 at Northern Illinois
Oct. 12 at Eastern Michigan
Oct. 19 Toledo
Oct. 26 Ohio
Nov. 5 at Western Michigan
Nov. 16 Central Michigan
Nov. 23 at Kent State
Nov. 29 Miami (Ohio)
#Indianapolis, IN

BOWLING GREEN (3-9, 2-6)
Bowling Green, OH
Aug. 29 Morgan State
Sept. 7 at Kansas State
Sept. 14 Louisiana Tech
Sept. 21 at Kent State
Oct. 5 at Notre Dame
Oct. 12 Toledo
Oct. 19 Central Michigan
Oct. 26 at Western Michigan
Nov. 2 Akron
Nov. 13 at Miami (Ohio)
Nov. 19 Ohio
Nov. 29 at Buffalo

BUFFALO (10-4, 7-1)
Buffalo, NY
Aug. 29 Robert Morris
Sept. 7 at Penn State
Sept. 14 at Liberty
Sept. 21 Temple
Sept. 28 at Miami (Ohio)
Oct. 5 Ohio
Oct. 19 at Akron
Oct. 26 Central Michigan
Nov. 2 at Eastern Michigan
Nov. 14 at Kent State
Nov. 20 Toledo
Nov. 29 Bowling Green

CENTRAL MICHIGAN (1-11, 0-8)
Mt. Pleasant, MI
Aug. 29 Albany
Sept. 7 at Wisconsin
Sept. 14 Akron
Sept. 21 at Miami (Fla.)
Sept. 28 at Western Michigan
Oct. 5 Eastern Michigan
Oct. 12 New Mexico State
Oct. 19 at Bowling Green
Oct. 26 at Buffalo
Nov. 2 Northern Illinois
Nov. 16 at Ball State
Nov. 29 Toledo

EASTERN MICHIGAN (7-6, 5-3)
Ypsilanti, MI
Aug. 31 at Coastal Carolina
Sept. 7 at Kentucky
Sept. 14 at Illinois
Sept. 21 C. Connecticut St.
Oct. 5 at Central Michigan
Oct. 12 Ball State
Oct. 19 Western Michigan
Oct. 26 at Toledo
Nov. 2 Buffalo
Nov. 12 at Akron
Nov. 19 at Northern Illinois
Nov. 29 Kent State

KENT STATE (2-10, 1-7)
Kent, OH
Aug. 29 at Arizona State
Sept. 7 Kennesaw State
Sept. 14 at Auburn
Sept. 21 Bowling Green
Oct. 5 at Wisconsin
Oct. 12 at Akron
Oct. 19 at Ohio
Oct. 26 Miami (Ohio)
Nov. 5 at Toledo
Nov. 14 Buffalo
Nov. 23 Ball State
Nov. 29 at Eastern Michigan

MIAMI (OHIO) (6-6, 6-2)
Oxford, OH
Aug. 31 at Iowa
Sept. 7 Tennessee Tech
Sept. 14 at Cincinnati
Sept. 21 at Ohio State
Sept. 28 Buffalo
Oct. 12 at Western Michigan
Oct. 19 Northern Illinois
Oct. 26 at Kent State
Nov. 6 at Ohio
Nov. 13 Bowling Green
Nov. 20 Akron
Nov. 29 at Ball State

NORTHERN ILLINOIS (8-6, 6-2)
DeKalb, IL
Aug. 31 Illinois State
Sept. 7 at Utah
Sept. 14 at Nebraska
Sept. 28 at Vanderbilt
Oct. 5 Ball State
Oct. 12 at Ohio
Oct. 19 at Miami (Ohio)
Oct. 26 Akron
Nov. 2 at Central Michigan
Nov. 13 at Toledo
Nov. 19 Eastern Michigan
Nov. 26 Western Michigan

OHIO (9-4, 6-2)
Athens, OH
Aug. 31 Rhode Island
Sept. 7 at Pittsburgh
Sept. 14 at Marshall
Sept. 21 Louisiana
Oct. 5 at Buffalo
Oct. 12 Northern Illinois
Oct. 19 Kent State
Oct. 26 at Ball State
Nov. 6 Miami (Ohio)
Nov. 12 Western Michigan
Nov. 19 at Bowling Green
Nov. 26 at Akron

TOLEDO (7-6, 5-3)
Toledo, OH
Aug. 31 at Kentucky
Sept. 14 Murray State
Sept. 21 at Colorado State
Sept. 28 BYU
Oct. 5 Western Michigan
Oct. 12 at Bowling Green
Oct. 19 at Ball State
Oct. 26 Eastern Michigan
Nov. 5 Kent State
Nov. 13 Northern Illinois
Nov. 20 at Buffalo
Nov. 29 at Central Michigan

WESTERN MICHIGAN (7-6, 5-3)
Kalamazoo, MI
Aug. 31 Monmouth
Sept. 7 at Michigan State
Sept. 14 Georgia State
Sept. 21 at Syracuse
Sept. 28 Central Michigan
Oct. 5 at Toledo
Oct. 12 Miami (Ohio)
Oct. 19 at Eastern Michigan
Oct. 26 Bowling Green
Nov. 5 Ball State
Nov. 12 at Ohio
Nov. 26 at Northern Illinois

MOUNTAIN WEST

AIR FORCE (5-7, 3-5)
Colorado Springs, CO
Aug. 31 Colgate
Sept. 14 at Colorado
Sept. 21 at Boise State
Sept. 28 San Jose State
Oct. 5 at Navy
Oct. 12 Fresno State
Oct. 19 at Hawaii
Oct. 26 Utah State
Nov. 2 Army
Nov. 9 at New Mexico
Nov. 16 at Colorado State
Nov. 30 Wyoming

BOISE STATE (10-3, 7-1)
Boise, ID
Aug. 31 vs. Florida State #
Sept. 5 Marshall
Sept. 14 Portland State
Sept. 21 Air Force
Oct. 5 at UNLV
Oct. 12 Hawaii
Oct. 19 at BYU
Nov. 2 at San Jose State
Nov. 9 Wyoming
Nov. 16 New Mexico
Nov. 23 at Utah State
Nov. 30 at Colorado State
#Jacksonville, FL

COLORADO STATE (3-9, 2-6)
Fort Collins, CO
Aug. 30 vs. Colorado #
Sept. 7 Western Illinois
Sept. 14 at Arkansas
Sept. 21 Toledo
Sept. 28 at Utah State
Oct. 5 San Diego State
Oct. 12 at New Mexico
Oct. 26 at Fresno State
Nov. 2 UNLV
Nov. 16 Air Force
Nov. 23 at Wyoming
Nov. 30 Boise State
#Denver, CO

FRESNO STATE (12-2, 7-1)
Fresno, CA
Aug. 31 at USC
Sept. 7 Minnesota
Sept. 21 Sacramento State
Sept. 28 at New Mexico State
Oct. 12 at Air Force
Oct. 19 UNLV
Oct. 26 Colorado State
Nov. 2 at Hawaii
Nov. 9 Utah State
Nov. 16 at San Diego State
Nov. 23 Nevada
Nov. 30 at San Jose State

HAWAII (8-6, 5-3)
Honolulu, HI
Aug. 24 Arizona
Sept. 7 Oregon State
Sept. 14 at Washington
Sept. 21 Central Arkansas
Sept. 28 at Nevada
Oct. 12 at Boise State
Oct. 19 Air Force
Oct. 26 at New Mexico
Nov. 2 Fresno State
Nov. 9 San Jose State
Nov. 16 at UNLV
Nov. 23 San Diego State
Nov. 30 Army

NEVADA (8-5, 5-3)
Reno, NV
Aug. 30 Purdue
Sept. 7 at Oregon
Sept. 14 Weber State
Sept. 21 at UTEP
Sept. 28 Hawaii
Oct. 12 San Jose State
Oct. 19 at Utah State
Oct. 26 at Wyoming
Nov. 2 New Mexico
Nov. 9 at San Diego State
Nov. 23 at Fresno State
Nov. 30 UNLV

NEW MEXICO (3-9, 1-7)
Albuquerque, NM
Aug. 31 Sam Houston State
Sept. 14 at Notre Dame
Sept. 21 New Mexico State
Sept. 28 at Liberty
Oct. 5 at San Jose State
Oct. 12 Colorado State
Oct. 19 at Wyoming
Oct. 26 Hawaii
Nov. 2 at Nevada
Nov. 9 Air Force
Nov. 16 at Boise State
Nov. 30 Utah State

SAN DIEGO STATE (7-6, 4-4)
San Diego, CA
Aug. 31 Weber State
Sept. 7 at UCLA
Sept. 14 at New Mexico State
Sept. 21 Utah State
Oct. 5 at Colorado State
Oct. 12 Wyoming
Oct. 19 at San Jose State
Oct. 26 at UNLV
Nov. 9 Nevada
Nov. 16 Fresno State
Nov. 23 at Hawaii
Nov. 30 BYU

MTSU Athletics; WKU Athletics; Akron Athletics; CMU Athletics; Hawaii Athletics

SAN JOSE STATE (1-11, 1-7)
San Jose, CA
Aug. 29 Northern Colorado
Sept. 7 Tulsa
Sept. 21 at Arkansas
Sept. 28 at Air Force
Oct. 5 New Mexico
Oct. 12 at Nevada
Oct. 19 San Diego State
Oct. 26 at Army
Nov. 2 Boise State
Nov. 9 at Hawaii
Nov. 23 at UNLV
Nov. 30 Fresno State

UNLV (4-8, 2-6)
Las Vegas, NV
Aug. 31 Southern Utah
Sept. 7 Arkansas State
Sept. 14 at Northwestern
Sept. 28 at Wyoming
Oct. 5 Boise State
Oct. 12 at Vanderbilt
Oct. 19 at Fresno State
Oct. 26 San Diego State
Nov. 2 at Colorado State
Nov. 16 Hawaii
Nov. 23 San Jose State
Nov. 30 at Nevada

UTAH STATE (11-2, 7-1)
Logan, UT
Aug. 30 at Wake Forest
Sept. 7 Stony Brook
Sept. 21 at San Diego State
Sept. 28 Colorado State
Oct. 5 at LSU
Oct. 19 Nevada
Oct. 26 at Air Force
Nov. 2 BYU
Nov. 9 at Fresno State
Nov. 16 Wyoming
Nov. 23 Boise State
Nov. 30 at New Mexico

WYOMING (6-6, 4-4)
Laramie, WY
Aug. 31 Missouri
Sept. 7 at Texas State
Sept. 14 Idaho
Sept. 21 at Tulsa
Sept. 28 UNLV
Oct. 12 at San Diego State
Oct. 19 New Mexico
Oct. 26 Nevada
Nov. 9 at Boise State
Nov. 16 at Utah State
Nov. 23 Colorado State
Nov. 30 at Air Force

PAC-12

ARIZONA (5-7, 4-5)
Tucson, AZ
Aug. 24 at Hawaii
Sept. 7 Northern Arizona
Sept. 14 Texas Tech
Sept. 28 UCLA
Oct. 5 at Colorado
Oct. 12 Washington
Oct. 19 at USC
Oct. 26 at Stanford
Nov. 2 Oregon State
Nov. 16 at Oregon
Nov. 23 Utah
Nov. 29 at Arizona State

ARIZONA STATE (7-6, 5-4)
Tempe, AZ
Aug. 29 Kent State
Sept. 6 Sacramento State
Sept. 14 at Michigan State
Sept. 21 Colorado
Sept. 27 at California
Oct. 12 Washington State
Oct. 19 at Utah
Oct. 26 at UCLA
Nov. 9 USC
Nov. 16 at Oregon State
Nov. 23 Oregon
Nov. 29 Arizona

CALIFORNIA (7-6, 4-5)
Berkeley, CA
Aug. 31 UC Davis
Sept. 7 at Washington
Sept. 14 North Texas
Sept. 21 at Ole Miss
Sept. 27 Arizona State
Oct. 5 at Oregon
Oct. 19 Oregon State
Oct. 26 at Utah
Nov. 9 Washington State
Nov. 16 USC
Nov. 23 at Stanford
Nov. 30 at UCLA

COLORADO (5-7, 2-7)
Boulder, CO
Aug. 30 vs. Colorado State #
Sept. 7 Nebraska
Sept. 14 Air Force
Sept. 21 at Arizona State
Oct. 5 Arizona
Oct. 11 at Oregon
Oct. 19 at Washington State
Oct. 25 USC
Nov. 2 at UCLA
Nov. 9 Stanford
Nov. 23 Washington
Nov. 30 at Utah
#Denver, CO

OREGON (9-4, 5-4)
Eugene, OR
Aug. 31 vs. Auburn #
Sept. 7 Nevada
Sept. 14 Montana
Sept. 21 at Stanford
Oct. 5 California
Oct. 11 Colorado
Oct. 19 at Washington
Oct. 26 Washington State
Nov. 2 at USC
Nov. 16 Arizona
Nov. 23 at Arizona State
Nov. 30 Oregon State
#Arlington, TX

OREGON STATE (2-10, 1-8)
Corvallis, OR
Aug. 30 Oklahoma State
Sept. 7 at Hawaii
Sept. 14 Cal Poly
Sept. 28 Stanford
Oct. 5 at UCLA
Oct. 12 Utah
Oct. 19 at California
Nov. 2 at Arizona
Nov. 8 Washington
Nov. 16 Arizona State
Nov. 23 at Washington State
Nov. 30 at Oregon

STANFORD (9-4, 6-3)
Stanford, CA
Aug. 31 Northwestern
Sept. 7 at USC
Sept. 14 at UCF
Sept. 21 Oregon
Sept. 28 at Oregon State
Oct. 5 Washington
Oct. 17 UCLA
Oct. 26 Arizona
Nov. 9 at Colorado
Nov. 16 at Washington State
Nov. 23 California
Nov. 30 Notre Dame

UCLA (3-9, 3-6)
Los Angeles, CA
Aug. 29 at Cincinnati
Sept. 7 San Diego State
Sept. 14 Oklahoma
Sept. 21 at Washington State
Sept. 28 at Arizona
Oct. 5 Oregon State
Oct. 17 at Stanford
Oct. 26 Arizona State
Nov. 2 Colorado
Nov. 16 at Utah
Nov. 23 at USC

USC (5-7, 4-5)
Los Angeles, CA
Aug. 31 Fresno State
Sept. 7 Stanford
Sept. 14 at BYU
Sept. 20 Utah
Sept. 28 at Washington
Oct. 12 at Notre Dame
Oct. 19 Arizona
Oct. 25 at Colorado
Nov. 2 Oregon
Nov. 9 at Arizona State
Nov. 16 at California
Nov. 23 UCLA

UTAH (9-5, 6-3)
Salt Lake City, UT
Aug. 29 at BYU
Sept. 7 Northern Illinois
Sept. 14 Idaho State
Sept. 20 at USC
Sept. 28 Washington State
Oct. 12 at Oregon State
Oct. 19 Arizona State
Oct. 26 California
Nov. 2 at Washington
Nov. 16 UCLA
Nov. 23 at Arizona
Nov. 30 Colorado

WASHINGTON (10-4, 7-2)
Seattle, WA
Aug. 31 Eastern Washington
Sept. 7 California
Sept. 14 Hawaii
Sept. 21 at BYU
Sept. 28 USC
Oct. 5 at Stanford
Oct. 12 at Arizona
Oct. 19 Oregon
Nov. 2 Utah
Nov. 8 at Oregon State
Nov. 23 at Colorado
Nov. 29 Washington State

Florida

WASHINGTON STATE (11-2, 7-2)
Aug. 31 New Mexico State
Sept. 7 Northern Colorado
Sept. 13 at Houston #
Sept. 21 UCLA
Sept. 28 at Utah
Oct. 12 at Arizona State
Oct. 19 Colorado
Oct. 26 at Oregon
Nov. 9 at California
Nov. 16 Stanford
Nov. 23 Oregon State
Nov. 29 at Washington
#NRG Stadium

SEC

ALABAMA (14-1, 8-0)
Tuscaloosa, AL
Aug. 31 vs. Duke #
Sept. 7 New Mexico State
Sept. 14 at South Carolina
Sept. 21 Southern Miss
Sept. 28 Ole Miss
Oct. 12 at Texas A&M
Oct. 19 Tennessee
Oct. 26 Arkansas
Nov. 9 LSU
Nov. 16 at Mississippi State
Nov. 23 Western Carolina
Nov. 30 at Auburn
#Atlanta, GA

ARKANSAS (2-10, 0-8)
Fayetteville, AR
Aug. 31 Portland State
Sept. 7 at Ole Miss
Sept. 14 Colorado State
Sept. 21 San Jose State
Sept. 28 vs. Texas A&M #
Oct. 12 at Kentucky
Oct. 19 Auburn
Oct. 26 at Alabama
Nov. 2 Mississippi State
Nov. 9 Western Kentucky
Nov. 23 at LSU
Nov. 30 vs. Missouri %
#Arlington, TX %Little Rock, AR

AUBURN (8-5, 3-5)
Auburn, AL
Aug. 31 vs. Oregon #
Sept. 7 Tulane
Sept. 14 Kent State
Sept. 21 at Texas A&M
Sept. 28 Mississippi State
Oct. 5 at Florida
Oct. 19 at Arkansas
Oct. 26 at LSU
Nov. 2 Ole Miss
Nov. 16 Georgia
Nov. 23 Samford
Nov. 30 Alabama
#Arlington, TX

FLORIDA (10-3, 5-3)
Gainesville, FL
Aug. 24 vs. Miami #
Sept. 7 Tennessee-Martin
Sept. 14 at Kentucky
Sept. 21 Tennessee
Sept. 28 Towson
Oct. 5 Auburn
Oct. 12 at LSU
Oct. 19 at South Carolina
Nov. 2 vs. Georgia %
Nov. 9 Vanderbilt
Nov. 16 at Missouri
Nov. 30 Florida State
#Orlando, FL %Jacksonville, FL

GEORGIA (11-3, 7-1)
Athens, GA
Aug. 31 at Vanderbilt
Sept. 7 Murray State
Sept. 14 Arkansas State
Sept. 21 Notre Dame
Oct. 5 at Tennessee
Oct. 12 South Carolina
Oct. 19 Kentucky
Nov. 2 vs. Florida #
Nov. 9 Missouri
Nov. 16 at Auburn
Nov. 23 Texas A&M
Nov. 30 at Georgia Tech
#Jacksonville, FL

KENTUCKY (10-3, 5-3)
Lexington, KY
Aug. 31 Toledo
Sept. 7 Eastern Michigan
Sept. 14 Florida
Sept. 21 at Mississippi State
Sept. 28 at South Carolina
Oct. 12 Arkansas
Oct. 19 at Georgia
Oct. 26 Missouri
Nov. 9 Tennessee
Nov. 16 at Vanderbilt
Nov. 23 Tennessee-Martin
Nov. 30 Louisville

LSU (10-3, 5-3)
Baton Rouge, LA
Aug. 31 Georgia Southern
Sept. 7 at Texas
Sept. 14 Northwestern State
Sept. 21 at Vanderbilt
Oct. 5 Utah State
Oct. 12 Florida
Oct. 19 at Mississippi State
Oct. 26 Auburn
Nov. 9 at Alabama
Nov. 16 at Ole Miss
Nov. 23 Arkansas
Nov. 30 Texas A&M

Florida: Tom DiPace; Missouri: Tim Umphrey; Coastal Carolina Athletics

MISSISSIPPI STATE (8-5, 4-4)
Starkville, MS
Aug.31 vs. Louisiana #
Sept. 7 Southern Miss
Sept.14 Kansas State
Sept.21 Kentucky
Sept.28 at Auburn
Oct. 12 at Tennessee
Oct. 19 LSU
Oct. 26 at Texas A&M
Nov. 2 at Arkansas
Nov. 16 Alabama
Nov. 23 Abilene Christian
Nov. 28 Ole Miss
#New Orleans, LA

MISSOURI (8-5, 4-4)
Columbia, MO
Aug.31 at Wyoming
Sept. 7 West Virginia
Sept.14 SE Missouri State
Sept.21 South Carolina
Oct. 5 Troy
Oct. 12 Ole Miss
Oct. 19 at Vanderbilt
Oct. 26 at Kentucky
Nov. 9 at Georgia
Nov. 16 Florida
Nov. 23 Tennessee
Nov. 30 vs. Arkansas #
#Little Rock, AR

OLE MISS (5-7, 1-7)
Oxford, MS
Aug.31 at Memphis
Sept. 7 Arkansas
Sept.14 SE Louisiana
Sept.21 California
Sept.28 at Alabama
Oct. 5 Vanderbilt
Oct. 12 at Missouri
Oct. 19 Texas A&M
Nov. 2 at Auburn
Nov. 9 New Mexico State
Nov. 16 LSU
Nov. 28 at Mississippi State

SOUTH CAROLINA (7-6, 4-4)
Columbia, SC
Aug.31 vs. North Carolina #
Sept. 7 Charleston Southern
Sept.14 Alabama
Sept.21 at Missouri
Sept.28 Kentucky
Oct. 12 at Georgia
Oct. 19 Florida
Oct. 26 at Tennessee
Nov. 2 Vanderbilt
Nov. 9 Appalachian State
Nov. 16 at Texas A&M
Nov. 30 Clemson
#Charlotte, NC

TENNESSEE (5-7, 2-6)
Knoxville, TN
Aug.31 Georgia State
Sept. 7 BYU
Sept.14 Chattanooga
Sept.21 at Florida
Oct. 5 Georgia
Oct. 12 Mississippi State
Oct. 19 at Alabama
Oct. 26 South Carolina
Nov. 2 UAB
Nov. 9 at Kentucky
Nov. 23 at Missouri
Nov. 30 Vanderbilt

TEXAS A&M (9-4, 5-3)
College Station, TX
Aug.31 Texas State
Sept. 7 at Clemson
Sept.14 Lamar
Sept.21 Auburn
Sept.28 vs. Arkansas #
Oct. 12 Alabama
Oct. 19 at Ole Miss
Oct. 26 Mississippi State
Nov. 2 UTSA
Nov. 16 South Carolina
Nov. 23 at Georgia
Nov. 30 at LSU
#Arlington, TX

Missouri

VANDERBILT (6-7, 3-5)
Nashville, TN
Aug.31 Georgia
Sept. 7 at Purdue
Sept.21 LSU
Sept.28 Northern Illinois
Oct. 5 at Ole Miss
Oct. 12 UNLV
Oct. 19 Missouri
Nov. 2 at South Carolina
Nov. 9 at Florida
Nov. 16 Kentucky
Nov. 23 East Tennessee State
Nov. 30 at Tennessee

SUN BELT

APPALACHIAN STATE (11-2, 7-1)
Boone, NC
Aug.31 East Tennessee State
Sept. 7 Charlotte
Sept.21 at North Carolina
Sept.28 Coastal Carolina
Oct. 9 at Louisiana
Oct. 19 ULM
Oct. 26 at South Alabama
Oct. 31 Georgia Southern
Nov. 9 at South Carolina
Nov. 16 at Georgia State
Nov. 23 Texas State
Nov. 30 at Troy

ARKANSAS STATE (8-5, 5-3)
Jonesboro, AR
Aug.31 SMU
Sept. 7 at UNLV
Sept.14 at Georgia
Sept.21 Southern Illinois
Sept.28 at Troy
Oct. 5 at Georgia State
Oct. 17 Louisiana
Oct. 26 Texas State
Nov. 2 at ULM
Nov. 16 Coastal Carolina
Nov. 23 Georgia Southern
Nov. 29 at South Alabama

COASTAL CAROLINA (5-7, 2-6)
Conway, SC
Aug.31 Eastern Michigan
Sept. 7 at Kansas
Sept.14 Norfolk State
Sept.21 at Massachusetts
Sept.28 at Appalachian State
Oct. 12 Georgia State
Oct. 19 at Georgia Southern
Nov. 2 Troy
Nov. 7 Louisiana
Nov. 16 at Arkansas State
Nov. 23 at ULM
Nov. 30 Texas State

GEORGIA SOUTHERN (10-3, 6-2)
Statesboro, GA
Aug.31 at LSU
Sept. 7 Maine
Sept.14 at Minnesota
Sept.28 Louisiana
Oct. 3 at South Alabama
Oct. 19 Coastal Carolina
Oct. 26 New Mexico State
Oct. 31 at Appalachian State
Nov. 9 at Troy
Nov. 16 ULM
Nov. 23 at Arkansas State
Nov. 30 Georgia State

GEORGIA STATE (2-10, 1-7)
Atlanta, GA
Aug.31 at Tennessee
Sept. 7 Furman
Sept.14 at Western Michigan
Sept.21 at Texas State
Oct. 5 Arkansas State
Oct. 12 at Coastal Carolina
Oct. 19 Army
Oct. 26 Troy
Nov. 9 at ULM
Nov. 16 Appalachian State
Nov. 23 South Alabama
Nov. 30 at Georgia Southern

LOUISIANA (7-7, 5-3)
Lafayette, LA
Aug.31 vs. Mississippi State #
Sept. 7 Liberty
Sept.14 Texas Southern
Sept.21 at Ohio
Sept.28 at Georgia Southern
Oct. 9 Appalachian State
Oct. 17 at Arkansas State
Nov. 2 Texas State
Nov. 7 at Coastal Carolina
Nov. 16 at South Alabama
Nov. 23 Troy
Nov. 30 ULM
#New Orleans, LA

SOUTH ALABAMA (3-9, 2-6)
Mobile, AL
Aug.31 at Nebraska
Sept. 7 Jackson State
Sept.14 Memphis
Sept.21 at UAB
Sept.28 at ULM
Oct. 3 Georgia Southern
Oct. 16 at Troy
Oct. 26 Appalachian State
Nov. 9 at Texas State
Nov. 16 Louisiana
Nov. 23 at Georgia State
Nov. 29 Arkansas State

Coastal Carolina

TEXAS STATE (3-9, 1-7)
San Marcos, TX
Aug.31 at Texas A&M
Sept. 7 Wyoming
Sept.14 at SMU
Sept.21 Georgia State
Sept.28 Nicholls Sate
Oct. 10 ULM
Oct. 26 at Arkansas State
Nov. 2 at Louisiana
Nov. 9 South Alabama
Nov. 16 Troy
Nov. 23 at Appalachian State
Nov. 30 at Coastal Carolina

TROY (10-3, 7-1)
Troy, AL
Aug.31 Campbell
Sept.14 Southern Miss
Sept.21 at Akron
Sept.28 Arkansas State
Oct. 5 at Missouri
Oct. 16 South Alabama
Oct. 26 at Georgia State
Nov. 2 at Coastal Carolina
Nov. 9 Georgia Southern
Nov. 16 at Texas State
Nov. 23 at Louisiana
Nov. 30 Appalachian State

ULM (6-6, 4-4)
Monroe, LA
Aug. 29 Grambling
Sept. 7 at Florida State
Sept.21 at Iowa State
Sept.28 South Alabama
Oct. 5 Memphis
Oct. 10 at Texas State
Oct. 19 at Appalachian State
Nov. 2 Arkansas State
Nov. 9 Georgia State
Nov. 16 at Georgia Southern
Nov. 23 Coastal Carolina
Nov. 30 at Louisiana

INDEPENDENTS

ARMY (11-2)
West Point, NY
Aug.30 Rice
Sept. 7 at Michigan
Sept.14 at UTSA
Sept.21 Morgan State
Oct. 5 Tulane
Oct. 12 at Western Kentucky
Oct. 19 at Georgia State
Oct. 26 San Jose State
Nov. 2 at Air Force
Nov. 9 Massachusetts
Nov. 16 VMI
Nov. 30 at Hawaii
Dec. 14 vs. Navy #
#Philadelphia, PA

BYU (7-6)
Provo, UT
Aug. 29 Utah
Sept. 7 at Tennessee
Sept.14 USC
Sept.21 Washington
Sept.28 at Toledo
Oct. 12 at South Florida
Oct. 19 Boise State
Nov. 2 at Utah State
Nov. 9 Liberty
Nov. 16 Idaho State
Nov. 23 at Massachusetts
Nov. 30 at San Diego State

LIBERTY (6-6)
Lynchburg, VA
Aug.31 Syracuse
Sept. 7 at Louisiana
Sept.14 Buffalo
Sept.21 Hampton
Sept.28 New Mexico
Oct. 5 at New Mexico State
Oct. 19 Maine
Oct. 26 at Rutgers
Nov. 2 at Massachusetts
Nov. 9 at BYU
Nov. 23 at Virginia
Nov. 30 New Mexico State

MASSACHUSETTS (4-8)
Amherst, MA
Aug.30 at Rutgers
Sept. 7 Southern Illinois
Sept.14 at Charlotte
Sept.21 Coastal Carolina
Sept.28 Akron
Oct. 5 at FIU
Oct. 12 at Louisiana Tech
Oct. 26 Connecticut
Nov. 2 Liberty
Nov. 9 at Army
Nov. 16 at Northwestern
Nov. 23 BYU

NEW MEXICO STATE (3-9)
Las Cruces, NM
Aug.31 at Washington State
Sept. 7 at Alabama
Sept.14 San Diego State
Sept.21 at New Mexico
Sept.28 Fresno State
Oct. 5 Liberty
Oct. 12 at Central Michigan
Oct. 26 at Georgia Southern
Nov. 9 at Ole Miss
Nov. 16 Incarnate Word
Nov. 23 UTEP
Nov. 30 at Liberty

NOTRE DAME (12-1)
South Bend, IN
Sept. 2 at Louisville
Sept.14 New Mexico
Sept.21 at Georgia
Sept.28 Virginia
Oct. 5 Bowling Green
Oct. 12 USC
Oct. 26 at Michigan
Nov. 2 Virginia Tech
Nov. 9 at Duke
Nov. 16 Navy
Nov. 23 Boston College
Nov. 30 at Stanford

2019 BOWL PROJECTIONS

ALAMO
Big 12 vs. Pac-12
Texas vs. Oregon

ARIZONA
Mountain West vs. Sun Belt
Hawaii vs. Louisiana

ARMED FORCES
Big Ten vs. Mountain West
Purdue vs. Air Force

BAHAMAS
Conference USA vs. MAC
FAU vs. Northern Illinois

BELK
ACC vs. SEC
Virginia Tech vs. Tennessee

BIRMINGHAM
American vs. SEC
Houston vs. Southern Miss*

BOCA RATON
American vs. MAC
USF vs. Ohio

CHEEZ-IT
Big 12 vs. Pac-12
Baylor vs. USC

CAMELLIA
MAC vs. Sun Belt
Western Michigan vs. Troy

CAMPING WORLD
ACC vs. Big 12
Virginia vs. Iowa State

CITRUS
Big Ten vs. SEC
Nebraska vs. Texas A&M

CURE
American vs. Sun Belt
SMU vs. Georgia Southern

DOLLAR GENERAL
MAC vs. Sun Belt
Toledo vs. Arkansas State

FAMOUS IDAHO POTATO
MAC vs. Mountain West
Buffalo vs. San Diego State

FRISCO
American vs. At-Large
Army* vs. Utah State

GASPARILLA
American vs. Conference USA
Cincinnati vs. FIU

HAWAII
American vs. BYU
Tulane vs. BYU

FIRST RESPONDER
Big 12 vs. Conference USA
TCU vs. North Texas

HOLIDAY
Big Ten vs. Pac-12
Iowa vs. Utah

INDEPENDENCE
ACC vs. SEC
Boston College vs. Louisiana Tech*

LAS VEGAS
Mountain West vs. Pac-12
Boise State vs. Stanford

LIBERTY
Big 12 vs. SEC
West Virginia vs. Memphis*

MILITARY
ACC vs. American
Pitt vs. Temple

MUSIC CITY
ACC/Big Ten vs. SEC
Miami (Fla.) vs. Kentucky

NEW MEXICO
Conference USA vs. Mountain West
UAB vs. Fresno State

NEW ORLEANS
Conference USA vs. Sun Belt
Marshall vs. Appalachian State

OUTBACK
Big Ten vs. SEC
Penn State vs. Auburn

PINSTRIPE
ACC vs. Big Ten
NC State vs. Michigan State

QUICK LANE
ACC vs. Big Ten
Wake Forest vs. Northwestern

REDBOX
Big Ten vs. Pac-12
Minnesota vs. Washington State

SUN
ACC vs. Pac-12
Florida State vs. UCLA

TAXSLAYER
ACC/Big Ten vs. SEC
Wisconsin vs. South Carolina

TEXAS
Big 12 vs. SEC
Oklahoma State vs. Mississippi State

New Year's Six

COTTON
At-Large vs. At-Large
Notre Dame vs. UCF

ORANGE
ACC vs. Big Ten/SEC/Notre Dame
Syracuse vs. Florida

ROSE
Big Ten vs. Pac-12
Ohio State vs. Washington

SUGAR
Big 12 vs. SEC
Oklahoma vs. LSU

* According to our projections, the SEC and American will fail to fill their allotted slots.

TRAVIS ETIENNE

COLLEGE FOOTBALL PLAYOFF

National Semifinal
FIESTA BOWL
CLEMSON VS. GEORGIA

National Semifinal
PEACH BOWL
ALABAMA VS. MICHIGAN

National Championship
Fiesta Bowl winner vs. Peach Bowl winner
CLEMSON VS. ALABAMA

RAEKWON DAVIS

Etienne, Davis: Harrison McClary

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